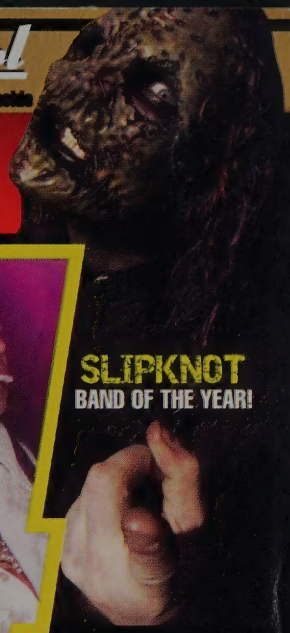


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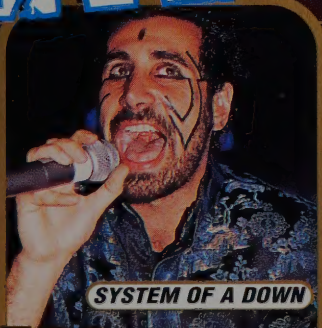
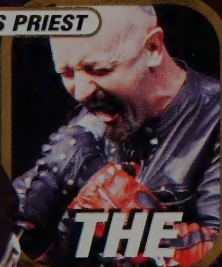
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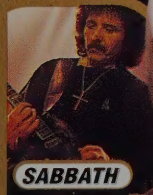
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SLIPKNOT PERCEPTIONS

Slipknot have proven themselves to be a truly special band. I loved their first two albums, but with **Vol 3**, they have not only shown that they have an amazing diversity of talent, but also the drive to be a major force in 2004. I was glad just to have the Knot back among us, but now I'm really excited about the way they've evolved into a truly amazing metal unit.

Mel
Fresno, CA

I like Slipknot as much as the next guy. But when you take away the masks, the image and the attitude, what's really left? I'm still not convinced there's one song that they've ever written that I'll be listening to five years from now. That's the problem with a lot of modern metal—it's just not designed for the long haul. I can't imagine people feeling that way about the likes of Queen, Zeppelin or even Korn the first time they heard them play.

Nash
Memphis, TN



Slipknot: Rising to the top.

Slipknot rock! Without question they are the most awesome band that metal has produced this century. And to think that they've got an amazing look to go right along with

their amazing sound. Even if you were blind and couldn't see their horrific masks or matching coveralls, you'd know these guys were awesome simply by listening to the

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metallic mayhem they created.

Zak

Lincoln, NE

Slipknot want to be like Kiss. They're not as good as Kiss. Have they ever written a song as good as *Strutter* or *Love Gun*? I don't think so. Kiss will always be the best theatrical hard rock band in the world. If you don't agree with me then you're definitely an idiot.

Benj

Orlando, FL

TOO MANY REUNIONS?

It was great seeing today's top metal talent at this year's *Ozzfest*. But I've gotta be honest—seeing legendary bands like Judas Priest and Black Sabbath was the most important thing for me. I grew up listening to these bands. And while they may look a little older these days (understandable after spending three decades atop the metal ladder), they both still sound amazing. Sure, Ozzy's voice—and body—have seen better days. But Sabbath still rocks! And Priest seems like they're really happy to be back together. Halford's voice is still incredible! So here's a salute to the great bands of yesteryear, who are fast proving themselves to be the great bands of today.

Dean

Newark, NJ

Do you know the old expression, "too much of a good thing?" Well, that's the way I feel about all these so-called "reunions" of famous heavy metal acts. It was cool when Kiss did that with their original lineup six or seven years ago. And it was okay when Iron Maiden did it back in 2001. But this year, not only did we have the together/apart/together/apart/together saga of Black Sabbath add another page, but we've also been confronted by the return of Judas Priest's best-known lineup. Don't get me wrong. I love all these bands and I'm happy that they're all together and making great music. But sometimes I think that the reason that so few young heavy metal bands have been able to make a significant mark over the last few years is that they're continually being upstaged by the ghosts of metal's past coming back to haunt them.

Myriam

Cincinnati, OH

Today's fans have no sense of metal history. For many of them, music began with Korn or Nirvana. I really pity all of them. They have no idea what they're missing. I'm not just talking about the bands that have hung around, like Judas Priest and Black Sabbath. I'm talking about two decades of amazing metal music, most of which is now being totally disregarded by fans, radio programmers and certainly the forces at MTV. Hopefully having a new generation of fans understand the on-stage brilliance of Priest and Sabbath will open their ears to many of the metal wonders of yesteryear.

Hank

San Jose, CA

Puh-leeze!! I don't want to hear (let alone



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look at) the tired heavy metal bands from 30 years ago. To me it's a joke that men well into the 50s are still willing to dress in fringed leather outfits and try to prove how "cool" they are to kids that are young enough to be their grandchildren. What's even more disturbing is that by stealing the spotlight from younger, deserving acts, these veteran bands serve to hinder the on-going growth of the metal form.

B.J.

Red Wing, MN

NEW BANDS

Thank you for drawing my attention to some of the hot new metal bands. Obviously, my local radio station would rather play Bee Gees hits from 1970 than anything new and cool. That's why I count on **Hit Parader** to turn me on to Damageplan, Breaking Benjamin, Flaw and Split Shift. I picked up their albums and was really surprised by how good they are. Thanks again.

Nick

Lowell, MA

Silvertide are the best new American hard rock band in ages. They remind me of a young Aerosmith. I love their album, and got to see them in concert a few weeks ago. They were great. They made it seem like they were making stuff up as they went along instead of following some computer-generated time sheet. They looked like they were having a great time, and that translated over into the crowd.

Doug

Des Moines, IA

WE READ YOUR MAIL



Black Sabbath:
Still the best.

It's great that Kittie are back and making great music. I remember a few years ago it seemed like these Kittie-cats were going to become hard rock's Next Big Thing. It didn't happen at the time. I know they've gone through some

changes, and that they've grown up. Good for them. They look and sound better than ever.
Adam
Norfolk, VA

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CAUGHT IN THE ACT

BY DAMON LANCASTER

RUSH

Professionalism. It's a word that infuses every aspect of Rush's rock and roll presentation. From their album cover art, to their recording techniques, to their intricately planned stage presentations, these veteran Canadian rockers approach their craft with a cool, collected vision that has served to separate them from the hard rockin' horde throughout their 30 year career. As they get ready for yet another show on their latest world tour—this one centering on the release of their feel-good '60s cover collection **Feedback**—vocalist/bassist Geddy Lee, guitarist Alex Lifeson and drummer Neil Peart act amazingly like businessmen preparing for another day at the office. There's certainly plenty of good-natured ribbing going on, and the mounds of state-of-the-art electronic equipment that fills the nearby hallways announce to everyone that these guys are either NASA scientists or a highly successful rock band. But there's an atmosphere around Rush that's unlike anything else in the hard rock world. Maybe it's the lack of outrageousness. Maybe it's the quiet confidence, maybe it's just the...professionalism.

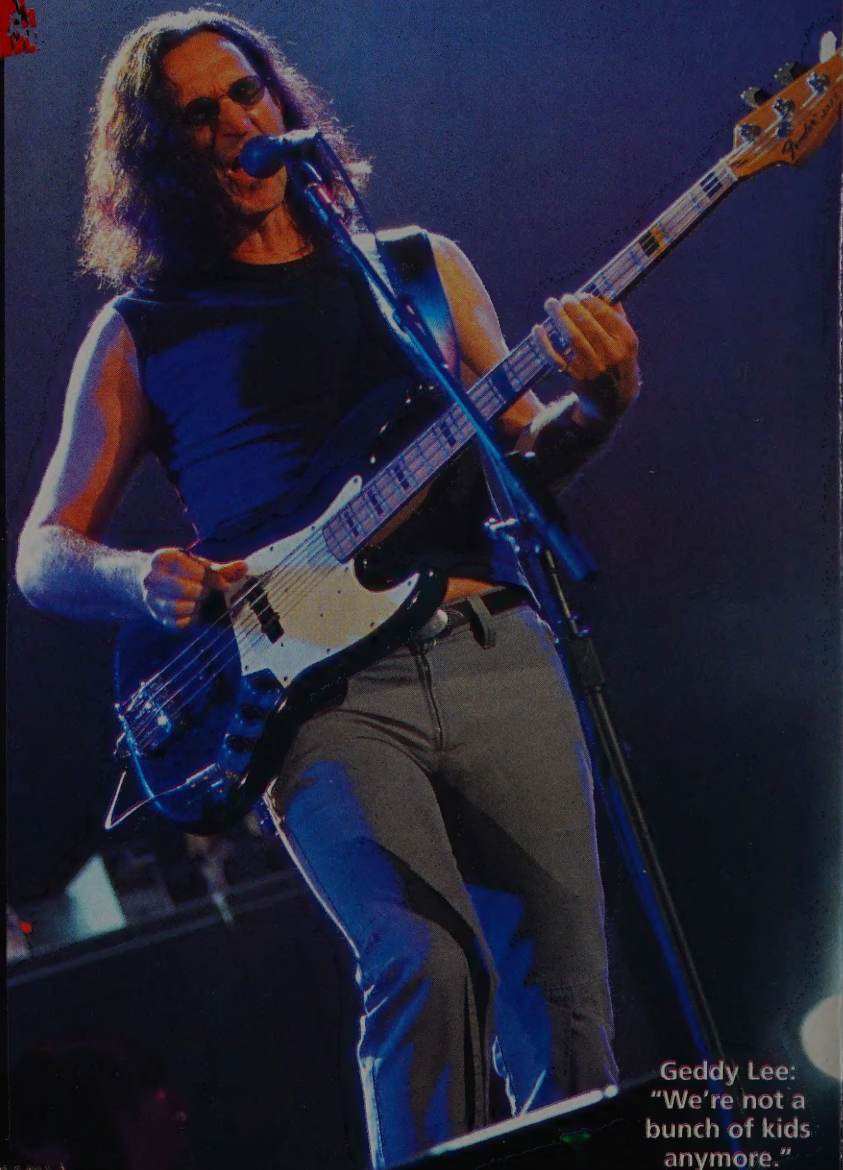
"I think that's a nice way to describe us," Lee said with a smile. "But there are times when things do get a little crazy. But to put it mildly we're not a bunch of kids on the road for the first time. This is our job. We love it, but we do approach it with an attitude of trying to minimize as many problem as possible."

Minimizing problems has turned this tour into one of the most satisfying and successful road jaunts in the band's three-decade career. As Lee was quick to explain, it wasn't that long ago that Rush had grown tired of the road, placing a strain on the band's internal chemistry that briefly threatened to permanently derail the group. But over the last few years they've learned to take life a little easier, cut back on their touring schedules a bit, and enjoy each show to the fullest.

"We were pushing ourselves too much at one time," Lee said. "We were spending too much time away from home, and that became very difficult for us. It was taking some of the fun out of playing our music, and that's too much of a price for us to pay. We learned the trick, however, and it wasn't hard. We take a little time off while we're on tour, and we try and not run ourselves ragged with a schedule that's too ambitious."

Judging by the attitude of the band, as well as that exhibited by their appreciative audience, Lee's assessment of Rush's current road jaunt was certainly accurate. Hitting the stage to the roars of the packed throng, the amazingly tight power trio immediately launched into a set that blended such revitalized '60s classics as *Summertime Blues*,

"We approach touring with the idea of minimizing any potential problem."



Geddy Lee: "We're not a bunch of kids anymore."

Heart Full of Soul and *The Seeker* with a hearty selection of chestnuts drawn from throughout their legendary career. While Lee's vocal timbre has mellowed a bit over the years, his piercing range still cut through the dense instrumental melange, serving as the perfect accouterment to Lifeson's nimble-fingered guitar work. As always "The Professor", Neil Peart displayed incredible dexterity and power on his humongous drum set. While many drummers have their massive kits on stage merely for show, Peart made use of every bit of his equipment during the band's intense two hour show. Utilizing five huge video screens that served to highlight the technical ecstasy provided in each song, the band roared through their show with a practiced precision that was almost overwhelming to witness. Yet, despite their cool, calculated approach there was an undeniable warmth that cascaded off the stage, down onto the gathered throng of 15,000 fans.

"We don't get to see Rush that often," one excited fan exclaimed at show's end. "But it was worth the wait. There's simply nobody like them in the world. They're just incredible. All I want to know is how three guys can produce so much great music on stage."

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BAND ON THE RISE!
SHOOTING STARS
BY BRAD STEWART



"We locked ourselves in a room and didn't come out until we were done."

Like a slightly-too-spicy lunch, rock history has a way of repeating itself. Stories evolve into legend, which serve to inspire one generation of musician unto the next. Case in point: the strange yet compelling tale of one Phil Tayler, a dude who during his 20 year run on Planet Earth has gone through hell and back in order to attain his musical dreams. This guy has faced poverty, homelessness and personal despair... and conquered them all along his rock and roll path. And in no small part, it was what Tayler read about the early exploits of Puddle of Mudd—a band that attained recognition by conning their way back stage and getting a demo tape into the hands of Limp Bizkit's Fred Durst—that allowed Tayler and his band, Future Leaders of the World, to get a solid jump up the ladder in their own quest for music biz notoriety.

"I had been told by this psychic that April 16, 2001 was going to be a big day in my life," Tayler said. "I happened to read that Puddle of Mudd was playing in town on that day, so I decided to do the same thing to them that they had done to Limp Bizkit. I was gonna go down to the show and jump backstage so I could give them my tape. I didn't even have a ticket. But I managed to get into the show and have someone take my tape backstage. But I wasn't satisfied. I wanted to make sure that it got into the right hands."

After picking up a free ticket from a friend he met outside the venue, Tayler put his plan into action. He placed his tape in the hands of a backstage worker and prayed for the best. But he soon realized that perhaps he was leaving too much of his fate to mere chance. On a whim, he decided to scale a protective barricade at the back of the hall, and seek out the members of Puddle of Mudd himself. Perhaps we'll never really know if Wes Scantlin or his crew got to hear the Future Leaders of the World demo, but luck did manage to step in and aid Tayler's cause. As he stumbled around backstage, he happened to run into Mike Flynn, a rock industry insider, who took instant inter-

Flynn's assistance (he is now the band's manager), the band soon landed a major label deal and set to work on the group's debut disc, **LVL IV**. Filled with stark lyrical images—many of which chronicle Tayler's hand-to-mouth existence—as well as gripping instrumental outbursts, the disc has already raised eyebrows from coast to coast. Indeed, in a music scene where doing things the "safe" way has almost become a mantra, the bold, unpredictable stance taken by FLOTW mark them as something truly unique.

"We approached this album the only way I could think of," Tayler said. "We locked ourselves in a room and decided not to come out

"We felt like we were lab rats."

est in this quirky, quixotic character.

"I met Mike backstage, and he was the only guy who seemed to show any interest in what I was saying," Tayler said. "He asked that I send him a demo, which I did. I didn't know if anything would come of it, but a few weeks later, Mike called me up in Buffalo—where I was living at the time—and said that he had raised enough money for us to record a demo. So we hopped in a car, drove all the way to L.A. That was the start of everything for this band."

Along with drummer Carl Messina, bassist Bill Hershey and guitarist Jake Stutevoos, vocalist Tayler took the opportunity presented by that recording session to launch Future Leaders of the World in a major way. With

until we knew we had enough music to make this album happen. At times we felt like we were lab rats in some corporate science experiment waiting to see if we could make a great record, go crazy, or both."

It is clear that on tracks like *For Sale*, *House of Chains* and *Spotlight*, the unorthodox manner in which Tayler and his crew approach **LVL IV** has produced some stellar results: "The songs on this album represent something special to me," Tayler said. "They're those defining moments when we decide to let the world happen to us, to stand up and fight for what we believe is right."



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**MATT
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*SHADOWS
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It seems as if the forces within the rock and roll world are once again set on doing their best to segment one type of music from another. While at one time in the not-so-distant past it was relatively "cool" for a heavy metal fan to embrace such divergent styles as punk, grunge and industrial, these days it seems as if the walls of demarcation are once again being forced into place. So where does all of that leave a band like Rise Against—a punk-and-proud-of-it unit with a noble heritage and a raucous sound designed to appeal to anyone who likes their music loud and fun-filled?

your outlook. So when Joe and I started this band, we decided right away that we wanted to put a more positive twist on things. We're definitely a punk band, and we let our opinions be known on a variety of social and political issues. But we never understood where voicing an opinion inherently meant that you had to be incredibly negative."

The "positive-is-good" ethic that surrounds Rise Against can be heard throughout the band's latest effort, **Siren Songs of the Counter-Culture**. And as the band traversed the face of North America as a vital link in last summer's Warped Tour, their strident

Things haven't always gone smoothly for McIlrath and his crew since they first began their musical quest five years ago, when the vocalist and Principe first got together. Over the next few years a variety of guitarists and drummers joined the Rise Against fold, only to quickly depart. While they kept up a non-stop search for musicians who could match their intensity and focus, McIlrath and Principe kept writing and recording, with their debut disc, **The Unraveling**, emerging in 2001. A little more than a year later, their second effort, **Revolutions Per Minute**, continued to expand their fan base, allowing

RISE AGAINST

"We're definitely a punk band



with some definite opinions."

THE GOOD FIGHT

BY MICHAEL JOSEPH

That's a question that continually confronts: vocalist/guitarist Tim McIlrath, guitarist Chris Chasse, bassist Jon Principe and drummer Brandon Barnes. But it's not a query that's causing this Chicago-based unit to lose either one minute of sleep or their musical focus. Since their formation back in 1999, Rise Against has been battling to bring an uplifting, positive attitude to punk music. And while they've occasionally found themselves facing a decidedly uphill battle, this unit knows that it's a fight well worth undertaking.

"The musical environment in which we started tended to be very negative," McIlrath said. "That's the way it was in Chicago a few years ago. It was almost cool to be really negative in our lyrics and in

sounds, pithy lyrics, and up-beat message began to find a home in the hearts of more and more fans from coast-to-coast. It was a phenomenon that greatly pleased this ambitious quartet... but McIlrath insists it wasn't one that totally surprised this ever-confident crew.

"We feel like we're capable of just about anything that we can imagine," the frontman said. "If something gets in our way, our attitude is to just write a new song and keep going. The best thing is that we're all sold on that attitude—it's not something that's artificial. We believe in what we do, and we believe in the music that we make. That in a nutshell is the essence of Rise Against."

the band to maintain a 200-shows-a-year touring regimen. Now, two years on, the band's major label debut, **Siren Songs of the Counter-Culture**, has shot them to a previously unimagined position of prominence within the contemporary punk world.

"Everything up to now has been an amazing learning experience for us," McIlrath said. "We've had some incredible experiences both in the studio and on the road. But after five years, we think we're ready to take that next big step. Hopefully this album will serve as that step and let a lot more people check out what we're up to. A lot of bands in the punk community are a little reticent about committing to a major label. But we've checked around. We think we've made the right move."

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NONPOINT



Nonpoint have sold hundreds of thousands of albums. They've toured with the likes of Linkin Park, Disturbed and Mudvayne. They've made their mark at *Ozzfest*. Yet despite all that they've accomplished over the last few years, it's our bet that many of you are just now beginning to discover this multi-dimensional hard rock unit. That's the way it goes for guitarist Elias Soriano, guitarist Andrew Goldman, bassist K.B. and drummer Robb Rivera. They've grown used to being overlooked and under appreciated during their five-year run at rock and roll notoriety. But with the release of their latest disc, *Recoil*, these Ft. Lauderdale residents insist that's all about to change.

"We've always been very good at taking everything that has been thrown at us and recoiling back," Soriano said. "That's where the title of the album comes from. We've been continually confronted by a lot of things—including a lot of people in this industry who simply didn't believe in us. But we've always believed in ourselves, and that's been enough... so far. Now we want to show those that have supported us that Nonpoint is at the best place we've ever been with our career—this music just rocks! It's the best we've come to capturing the energy of our live show."

The "best" career place that Nonpoint currently find themselves comes after years of dedication for this multi-ethnic heavy metal unit. Formed in Ft. Lauderdale in the late '90s, within a year the band had landed a major label deal and recorded two albums (2000's *Statement* and 2002's *Development*) that wowed fans with their power and diversity. With their bold blend of musical reactants (which range from metal to hip-hop to jazz), and the surprising accessibility that pervades each and every one of their razor-edged songs, the group's discs soon won over a dedicated following among the metal underground. But it was when the unit translated those studio tracks upon the concert stage that the true magic of Nonpoint's approach was revealed in all its guitar-driven glory.

**"We
take what's
thrown at us
and recoil
back."**

"Hitting the stage with these guys is one of the most powerful feelings I've ever experienced," Soriano said. "On most nights it's like there's an explosion that occurs. Everyone is into their own things, but somehow it all comes together to form the sound we want. We don't necessarily understand how that happens, but we're just glad that it does."

The success of their live shows began to draw more and more people to Nonpoint's musical cause, in the process making their discs moderate success stories both here and abroad. But despite their burgeoning career, when the chance came to change labels earlier this year, the band jumped at the opportunity, believing a new company, and a more appreciative staff, may finally lead this unit to the rock and roll promised land. Certainly with *Recoil* the Nonpoint boys have lived up to their end of the bargain, delivering a tight, simmering brew of hard rock ingredients which never seem to go exactly where the listener might expect.

It is unquestionably the inherent diversity of Nonpoint's style that provides the music contained on *Recoil* with much of its strength and substance. While tunes like the explosive *Broken Bones* and the wall-shaking *Move Now* utilize a variety of cutting-edge metallic ideals, others—especially on the disc's first single, *The Truth*—defiantly showcase just how different Nonpoint can be. But this unit's goal has never been to be different merely for difference's sake. Rather, their ambition has always been to fully and effectively utilize their diverse backgrounds and tastes to make Nonpoint as entertaining as possible.

"Each of us brings his own thing into the band, and that's what makes us work," he said. "There's the Spanish side of things thanks to Robb and myself, there's a bluesy side of things which is due to Andrew's guitar playing, while KB brings in a whole 'nother side of things—a lot of which are just off-the-wall. It somehow all comes together as Nonpoint."

THE LEGENDS OF ROCK ERUPT ON SPV!



"We haven't changed as much as we've evolved."

BY PHILIP REESE

After nearly a decade of trying, it seems that Eighteen Visions have finally figured out this rock and roll thing. For this hard-hitting, darkly probing Orange County, CA, metal-core unit, their music has always been more than their creative release, more than their emotional outlet, and more than their means of expression. For Guitarist Keith Barney, guitarist Ken Floyd, vocalist James Hart, bassist Mick Morris and drummer Jason Shrout, their music has been nothing less than their obsession. So when this charismatic unit got around to releasing their third album, what could have been a more appropriate title for their singularly driven sound than, you guessed it, **Obsession**?

"It was a very good title for us because it conveys a great deal of our attitude," Hart said. "I think you have to be kind of obsessive to stick around in this business—even if it's doing something you truly love. But our music also tends to be very emotional, so things like obsession and desire tend to work themselves in there a lot of the time."

Hart and his cohorts have been working on perfecting their emotion-laden hard rock approach even since the fist version of Eighteen Visions came to life back in 1995. At that time, the group centered around Hart and Floyd... who was then the group's drummer. As part of the burgeoning D.C. metal-core

scene which also featured the likes of Atreyu and Bleeding Through, Eighteen Vision found themselves wrapped in a creative cocoon, one in which they were free to explore the darkly depressing concepts that so motivated their song stylings. After a period of trial-and-error growth, by the time the New Millennium arrived, the band felt ready to take their next big step, recording an independently released disc, **Until The Ink Runs Out**, that served to turn them on to the entire hard rock community.

"That record served its purpose because it allowed us to get a little more recognition, and get a lot more touring opportunities," Hart said. "That's been true in Europe as well as in the U.S., which has been a really good thing for us. European fans seem to have a real strong attachment to our kind of music, and even though we grew up 6,000 miles apart, we share that affinity with them, as well."

Eighteen Vision's initial foray into the international hard rock circuit yielded a string of positive reviews and standing on-tour ovations—more than enough for this determined unit to forge ahead with their music plans. By 2002 they had released a second disc, **Vanity**—from which the song *You Broke Like Glass* became a staple on MTV2. More world-wide tours followed, with the

unit sharing the stage with the likes of Lamb of God and Strung Out. But despite the success they had already enjoyed, when it became time to begin work on **Obsession**, these guys knew they had to shake things up. It was then that Floyd moved over to guitar, providing the band with a more intense, yet diverse musical attack.

Indeed, for many fans who've grown to know and love Eighteen Visions on the strength of their first two disc, this new album comes as something of a shock. Breaking down barriers and preconceived musical notions with equal ease, on **Obsession** this quintet push the bounds of the metal-core style by incorporating a number of more traditional hard rock elements within their sound. While some long-time band observers may need to few listens to change their perspectives on tracks like *I Let Go* and *This Time*, there's no denying that on their latest release Eighteen Vision has found the artistic balance with which they're most comfortable.

"With Ken switching to guitar, and Jason joining the band, a lot of new avenues suddenly opened themselves up to us," Hart said. "We haven't changed as much as we've evolved. Each thing we've done has drawn upon our history as a band and expanded upon it."

EIGHTEEN VISIONS



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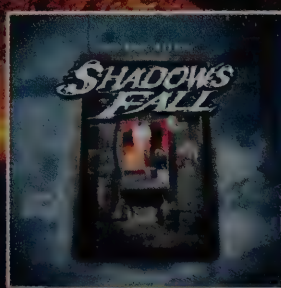
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HEAVY METAL HAPPENINGS

SLIPKNOT: Don't expect to see much of Slipknot on U.S. shores until early in 2005. Following their summer-long run at *Ozzfest*, the band took off for European shores where they wowed the Continental crowds. Now the band is taking a short break before resuming their U.S. road jaunt. "That was the plan all along," said vocalist Corey Taylor. "We toured as part of Jagermeister before we went out on *Ozzfest*, so we knew that we had done our share of U.S. tour dates. But there will be plenty more coming, that's for sure!"

PRIEST: Reports emanating out of London indicate that Judas Priest are planning a world-wide tour following the December release of their new album. According to guitarist Glenn Tipton, the group was so encouraged by the response given them throughout last summer's *Ozzfest* that the group is considering increasing the size of their tour. "We may stay in the road longer than initially planned," he said. "But that will be dictated by a number of factors. Right now the plan is to hit the States in early '05, and tour the rest of the world after that."

DARKNESS: Only a year after their debut disc, *Permission to Land*, transformed them into international stars, it appears as if the Darkness are ready to unleash another dose of their "vintage" rock and roll magic upon us. The band has completed recording their sophomore album, and hope to have it released around the globe in mid-March. Of



Staind: New disc ready to go.



Black Sabbath: Future is unclear.

to try and get the reformed Black Sabbath into the recording studio at the end of their recent *Ozzfest* run, it appears as if vocalist Ozzy Osbourne is determined to stick to his original plan and record a solo disc. It's been years since Ozzy's last solo studio effort, and the hyperactive rocker (at the "suggestion" of his wife/manager, Sharon) wants to make sure that he has his disc ready to go before next year's Fest gets ready to roll. "Ozzy has been planning another solo disc for years," said a source. "But now the time is finally right to get it going."

SYSTEM: All systems appear to be "go" for System of a Down concerning the completion of their new disc. A band *never* renowned for rushing things in the studio (they took four years between the release of their first and second discs), the unit seems determined to have their latest collection on the streets before 2004 draws to a close. "It may turn out to be early 2005," corrects vocalist Serj Tankian. "But the album is coming. It just takes time for us to make sure everything is exactly the way we want it to be."

course, as with just about everything else in the music biz these days, that could change at a moment's notice. "That is the plan," said vocalist Justin Hawkins. "We've gotten the

album done, and if I must say, it's brilliant! I think everyone will love it."

SABBATH: Despite Tony Iommi's goading

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Velvet Revolver: Surprising themselves.

ALTER BRIDGE: The old saying is that lightning never strikes the same place twice, and guitarist Mark Tremonti admits he was concerned by that notion when he first put together his new band, Alter Bridge. After all, Tremonti and bandmate Scott Phillips had risen to the pinnacle of commercial success with Creed, and the pair wondered if they could actually do it again. "Creed was a phenomenon, we know that," he said. "We also know the comparisons are inevitable. We're confident to welcome them. I can't promise our album (*One Day Remains*) will match the success we had with Creed, but musically we believe it holds its own."

VELVET REVOLVER: Velvet Revolver guitarist Slash says the word that might best describe his mood these days is "relieved." While the axe legend always sensed that his new unit would live up to the hype that preceded the release of their debut disc, *Contraband*, it's something else to have actually done it. "Looking back there is a bit of relief," he said. "Just the fact that we made a great album, kicked ass on the road, and put smiles on a lot of faces if enough to make me feel great."

STAINED: According to guitarist Mike Mushok, the only "problem" that Stained encountered while completing their latest disc was deciding which songs to include... and which ones to leave on the studio floor. "That's always an interesting situation, he said. "You work on something, and know that it has great potential, yet it just doesn't come together the way you had initially hoped. What do you do

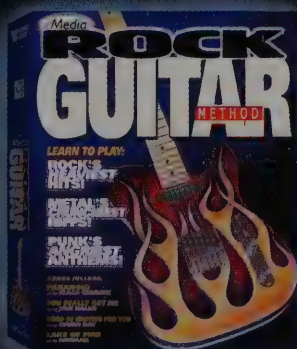
with it? Work to complete it? Leave it behind? Thankfully, this time we had enough material so we didn't have to really worry about any of that."

DISTURBED: It's now been more than two years since Disturbed's last studio disc, *Believe*, and this Chicago-based unit are beginning to feel the heat in terms of getting their next studio projected completed. Vocalist David Draiman says that despite the band's desire to have a new disc ready to go ASAP, they refuse to rush in order to meet anyone's deadline... including their own. "One of the benefits of having a little success is that you earn a little more freedom when it comes to things like recording schedules," he said. "Of course the label would like it ready in time for this holiday or that one, but we've decided that it'll be ready when it's ready."

Noted rock photographer Bob Leafe— whose work has appeared on the pages of *Hit Parader* many times throughout the years - has recently launched a career-spanning retrospective website at, appropriately, WWW.BOBLEAFE.COM. They're all there, from AC/DC to ZZ Top (with stories!), chronicling Leafe's decades of work behind the rock and roll scene. So whether you just want to take a stroll down Metal Memory Lane or purchase an image or two, this is the place to go!

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METALLICA

METAL MONSTER

BY TERRY ABBOTT

Sometimes it seems like no matter how "good" they try to be, how dedicated they are to not raising a ruckus through their words, deeds or actions, the members of Metallica just seem to have a natural affinity for shaking things up just a little too much. Only recently removed from a tempestuous period when the departure of bassist Jason Newsted, the rehab stint of guitarist James Hetfield, and the Napster baiting of drummer Lars Ulrich threatened to turn this legendary Bay Area unit into a metal pariah, it seems as if Metallica are once again stirring the rock and roll pot.

Paramount among the band's recent activities has been their determined—and successful—efforts to change record labels from their long-time home at Elektra to the fresher faces at Warner Bros. While this may not rank as a headline story to many since it's more of an internal move within the recently restructured Warner Music group, it still signifies that the Metallimen aren't worried about throwing their considerable weight around if and when they deem it necessary. Thus, their recent **Some Kind of Monster** CD—which featured six live Metallica classics plus alternate versions of the title track—represents the first time in over two decades that a Metalli-disc hasn't appeared under the Elektra

banner.

"Both the band and those around them were rather adamant about the

change," said an inside source at the label.

"Apparently when Elektra was absorbed, virtually all of their long-time contacts were let go an inside source revealed." They seemed to feel that this was the right time to make the change."

Apparently those in and around Metallica believed that the recent changes within Elektra—which had seen many of their long-time supporters within the label leave as the company was merged with Atlantic Records—would significantly weaken the band's ability to reach their core audience. Thus the move to Warner Bros. (perceived by some as the most "stable" element within the new Warner hierarchy) was deemed a necessary move by the Metallica brain-trust. Who really knows if the move has had much of an impact upon the sales of **Some Kind of Monster**, which made a significant, if non-spectacular chart run during the summer of '04. But apparently the members of Metallica are quite content concerning their label shift.

Indeed, the documentary film of the same

"The whole idea started out as a way of chronicling the making of an album... and it turned out to be a lot more than that.."

PHOTOS: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

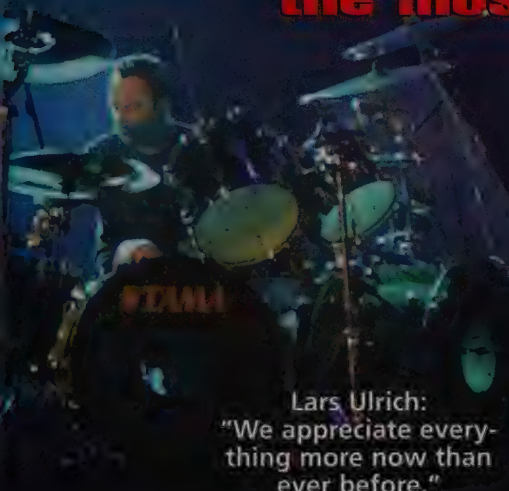
name proved to be more of a hit than its album side-piece. The movie wowed both Metallica fans and mainstream audiences with its warts-and-all portrayal of Metallica during a particularly harrowing year-long period in the group's history—the time when they were planning and attempting to record their 2003 disc, *St. Anger*. Filled with eye-opening revelations about the band's delicate internal chemistry, and jammed with the kind of all-too-human frailties that fans would normally *never* associate with the tough-as-nails Metallimani, *Some Kind of Monster* has been hailed far-and-wide as a "classic" of the "rockumentary" genre.

"The movie came out differently than we might have expected," Ulrich said. "But then, since we had no idea what would be transpiring during the time of filming we could never have imagined what would be in it. The



James Hetfield:
A lean, mean, clean rockin' machine.

"In a lot of ways this is a very important tour for us... and it's proven to be one of the most satisfying as well."



Lars Ulrich:
"We appreciate everything more now than ever before."

whole idea started out as a way of chronicling the making of an album... and it turned out to be a lot more than that."

Despite the commotions caused by their label shifts and their stellar movie reviews, it seems as if Metallica—Ulrich, Hetfield, guitarist Kirk Hammett and bassist Robert Trujillo—have done their best to avoid outside distractions and keep their focus where it belongs. Indeed, the band has maintained a hectic tour schedule with their on-going *Madly In Anger With the World* tour, which now seems likely to stretch right through the end of the year. With packed houses of adoring fans greeting the band at every stop along the tour trail,

this revitalized unit seems to be having the time of their lives back on the road.

"Having gone through the period we did, where James wasn't as comfortable touring, and Robert was just beginning to work into the band, we've welcomed this opportunity with open arms."

Ulrich said. "In a lot of ways this is a very important tour for us... and it's proven to be one of the most satisfying as well."

Despite all that they've gone through, and the indelicate public scrutiny many of their actions have drawn, there can be no denying the lingering power of Metallica. Through constantly changing trends,

constantly changing tastes and constantly changing times, this heavy-handed unit has managed to rule supreme. But these days with the ever-changing face of the rock and roll world staring them in the face, Metallica finds themselves facing a new problem. For the first time in their storied 25 year career, they find themselves in the position of having prove their metallic worth to a new generation of riff-loving fans.

"We've never gotten caught up in trends or anything like that," Ulrich said. "We have the ability to stay in touch with what's happening while maintaining a blind eye to that direct influence. When we get together and start making music we know it's going to be true to what Metallica has always stood for. I'm

sure there'll come a time when people won't care... we just hope that's not gonna happen for a long time."

Still, despite Ulrich's positive words, up until their most recent tour, there were some within the hard rock community who had begun to question whether or not Metallica still had the drive and determination to create music that lived up to the legacy created by such classic discs as *...And Justice For All*, *Master of Puppets* and *Metallica*. After all, the logic went, each band member is now a multi-millionaire on the far-side of 40... where does the motivation to create great heavy metal still lie? While he is certainly aware that such sentiment was lurking out there among the rock and roll rabble, Ulrich now admits that he hasn't lost one minute of sleep worrying about either Metallica's on-going motivation, or protecting the group's vibrant legacy.

"I can't remember the last time I actually thought about Metallica's legacy," he said. "If someone brings up our previous accomplishments, then perhaps we think about it. But when we're on the road or just working among ourselves, the 'Metallica Legacy' never is even considered. We're not trying to compete with ourselves. All we're trying to do is make the best music we can."

Sometimes it appears as if vocalist Josey Scott, guitarist Chris D, guitarist Wayne Swinney, drummer Paul Crosby and bassist Dave Novotny live in the eye of a rock and roll hurricane. Ever since Saliva's debut disc, **Every Six Seconds**, shot this Memphis-based hard rock unit to the top back in Y2K, they've been doing everything in their power to make sure that their brand of straight-between-the-eyes, blues-based rock reaches as many ears as humanly possible. And now with the world-wide acclaim dumped upon their latest release, **Survival of the Sickest**, it appears as if this power-packed quintet have placed themselves perfectly to make a major impact on the metal scene of late 2004. Despite the need to make some internal changes with the business side of things following the luke warm success of the band's sophomore effort, **Back Into Your System**, this unit now appears more focused, more hungry and more determined than ever. Recently we caught up with the ever-informative Mr. Scott to get the scoop on the latest happenings in the world of Saliva.



"Sometimes you need to open your eyes and see what's goin' on around you."

BY WILLIAM BARKER

Hit Parader: You changed a lot of the people surrounding the band a few months ago. Why did you feel the need for such change?

Josey Scott: Sometimes you've got to just shake things up a bit. Obviously, the most important people—the guys in the band—all stayed the same. But sometimes you need to open your eyes and take a good look around you, and when I looked at some of the business guys, I didn't necessarily like what I saw. It's

why this is by-far the heaviest album we've done. It was a very therapeutic process for us.

HP: But Saliva enjoyed a great deal of initial success because of the inherent diversity of your approach. Are you concerned that you lost some of that?

JS: Nah, all the stuff that made this band what it was a few years ago is still there—only it's better. If you listen to what we're doing now, you still hear a lot of the old Memphis-style blues roots that are at the core of our music. And you can still hear traces of the hip-hop stuff that we've gotten into over the years. But at our core we've always been a good, solid, loud rock and roll band, and that's what you get on **Survival of the Sickest**.

HP: Just to get it out of the way, what's up with you and Nickelback's Chad Kroeger? You've been taking some major shots at him recently.

JS: Well, let's just say that while I still respect Chad as a musician and as a songwriter, I have a lot less respect for him as a businessman. As you probably know, we worked together on the song *Hero*, which was a big hit off of the soundtrack from the first *Spider-Man* movie. I don't want to get too into it because it'll just set me off again, but you can report that people made millions of dollars off of that song, and I didn't get close to what I was promised. I was screwed, pure and simple. What they paid me is so embarrassingly low that I don't even want to say it. I was promised almost ten times as much for my work in the studio, and another big check for being part of the video. All I can tell you is that I haven't seen a penny of it.

HP: Where do you think Saliva fits into the hard rock scene of 2004?

JS: To be totally honest with you, I don't care where we fit in. I say that because I don't real-

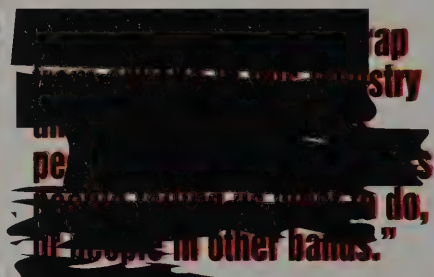
ly respect a lot of the music and a lot of the bands that are out there right now. I don't think they understand what the kids want. They're all into it to make themselves look good and act like stars. It's not about that for us. We're there to put a smile on the kid's faces. We want to create a rock and roll party when we're on stage. We want them all to dig being there, and dig each other. They don't need to stand in one place in order to look at me mope around the stage.

HP: What's the story behind the album title **Survival of the Sickest**?

JS: That's one thing for sure, we've had some very cool album titles. They've all made people sit up and take notice right away. This one is kind of a commentary on society in general, but it's particularly true about the music industry. That's one thing I've learned about the rock and roll business over the last few years—you've got to be sick to do this for a living, and the ones that survive are the sickest of all. It just kind of popped up one day as we were writing, and right away we knew that was gonna be the title.

HP: Give us an overview of the last five years—the time in which Saliva has grown from a local act to a national band with three hit albums under your belt.

JS: It's been a very interesting time, that's for sure. For the most part, we've been very fortunate, and we've enjoyed virtually everything that's happened to us. But after the last album we realized that some changes had to be made. Those business guys were let go and new people brought in. We also developed an "attitude" this time. No more Mr. Nice Guys for us. We still love our fans, but we're not taking any crap from anyone in this industry any more—whether it's people at the label, business people telling us what to do, or people in other bands. If they don't like us, then all I can say to 'em is "Bring it on!"



important to make sure that everyone who's working with the band is on the same page. And while I know in my heart that everyone wanted this band to succeed in a big way, I just didn't feel that we were all necessarily pulling in the same direction.

HP: Did those changes have a major impact on the way in which you approached **Survival of the Sickest**?

JS: To be honest I don't think anything this side of a major earthquake could get us to change what we do. But what it did do was get us all to focus on what we were doing and make sure this was the hardest, heaviest, most kick-ass album we could possibly make. There was quite a bit of frustration around us when we went into the studio, and a lot of that pent-up emotion made it onto the album. That's



JOSEY SCOTT

HP

"This has exceeded all of our expectations."



Z02

BY ROB ANDREWS

CHANCE OF A LIFETIME

We don't often write about "unsigned" bands on these hallowed pages. And that's done with good reason. After all, there are dozens-upon dozens of signed bands struggling for a little recognition, and we always figure they deserve our support more than anyone else. But when the unsigned band in question—and by that we mean a group without any major or indie label affiliation—happens to land the opening gig on a summer-long national tour with Kiss and Poison, we figured they might be worth checking out. And in the case of Z02, that notion proved to be right-on correct!

The fact of the matter is guitarist/vocalist Paulie Z, bassist/vocalist David Z and drummer Joey Cassata have the kind of natural, real-deal rock and roll flair that is too rarely heard these days... especially from an American band. But much like Euro-flavored rock revivalists like the Darkness and Jet, and home-grown riff-mongers such as Silvertide, this Brooklyn-based unit seems determined

upon learning that they had landed this potentially career-making gig, though they believe their ambitious, Noo Yawk-style publicity machine may have aided their quest to land such a plum touring assignment.

"We're pretty aggressive when it comes to promoting the band," David said. "And we're surrounded by people who believe in us as much as we do. That's the kind of passion and dedication that you need to make a mark these days. All-in-all that makes for a great situation. Our manager is a friend of Paul Stanley's, and he had gotten our album and he evidently liked what he heard. We would have been happy to land one or two dates on the tour, but one thing led to another, and before we knew it we had landed the opening slot for all 37 dates... and even getting paid for it!"

While David may make Z02's recent accomplishments sound rather matter-of-fact, no one can deny the significance of this unit's achievements. But after checking out the contents of **Tuesdays**

"Kiss has been great to us; they've opened a lot of doors."

and **Thursdays**, it's easy to understand why Stanley—and just about everyone else who's checked out this group's work—ends up reacting excitedly to the brand of music Z02 makes. On such

to bring a bit of much-needed swagger into the hard rock fold, a fact that can be heard throughout their self-financed debut disc, **Tuesdays and Thursdays**.

"Getting the chance to tour with bands like Kiss and Poison is an amazing thrill for us," David said. "And it's an amazing opportunity as well. We know the odds of a band in our position getting a chance like this. There are so many young bands on major labels that would kill to do this. But we've gotten the chance, and we're gonna do everything we can to make it work for us."

So exactly how does a band from the "mean streets" of Brooklyn, NY find themselves on a tour with the likes of Poison and Kiss? After all, Paul Stanley and Gene Simmons have always been known to be pretty fair judges of rock and roll talent, and obviously it was they who provided the ultimate thumb's-up to Z02's summer-long road romp. According to the Z02 boys, they were as surprised as anyone

tracks as *Takin' Me Down* and *Fly On Your Wings*, this unit manages to simultaneously draw inspiration from the halcyon ghosts of hard rocks past, as well as pay homage to many of today's trend-setting acts. It's a neat trick if you can pull it off, but Z02 clearly have their rock and roll priorities lined up in the right order... and it's about to pay big dividends for this go-for-broke power trio.

"We're the kind of band that's ready for anything," David said. "Let us play in front of 10,000 people and we won't let you down; put us in a packed club and we'll blow the roof off. All we've ever asked for is the chance to get up there and play. We're not waiting for labels to bang on our doors—we'll just do it ourselves! We're totally convinced that there's not a situation that won't bring out the best in us."



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It's now been nearly six months since Velvet Revolver's debut album, *Contraband*, lit up the rock and roll skies with its rugged riffs, volatile vocals and take-no-prisoners attitude.

During that time guitarist Slash, vocalist Scott Weiland, bassist Duff McKagan, drummer Matt Sorum and rhythm guitarist Dave Kushner have continually proven their musical worth through a series of high-profile MTV videos and a string of incredible concert performances. Even with the still-lingering specter of Weiland's off-stage difficulties hovering over the group's collective head, the VR camp has forged boldly ahead, creating a sight and sound explosion that for many has

sure, Slash may no longer choose to perpetually live life on the razor's edge, where his past activities marked him as one of hard rock's most notorious—and self-destructive—forces. These days the long-haired guitarist seems far more at peace with both himself and with those around him. In the process, he has become a happier, healthier rock and roll force.

"It's really cool to feel great, and to be with people whose sole goal is to make great music," the guitarist said. "People can say anything they want about me and about this band. All we care about is that they listen to the music. We've had so many opportunities in our lives. Some of them we've taken advantage of, and others have slipped through our fingers. We want to make sure that we take every advantage of the great

then hoping for the best."

"The music is very aggressive, almost vicious in the way it just explodes on every track," Weiland added. "We grab you right in the beginning and we don't let go! You should feel like you need to lace up your boots real tight and get ready for a fight. I used the toxic nature of the relationship I was in to fuel a lot of the writing I did for this album. That's why many of the lyrics on songs like *Fall to Pieces* and *Headspace* are very personal. But I think that everyone can relate to them on some level. The only other album I ever put as much effort into was the first STP album—and I know a lot more now."

Whether it's comparing Velvet

"Success is something you never take for granted."

VELVET REVOLVER

STRAIGHT A I M

recalled the halcyon days of the hard rock empire.

For Velvet Revolver, the success of their debut disc is far from unexpected. After all, the band's members past histories in such stellar outfits as Guns 'N Roses and the Stone Temple Pilots virtually guaranteed a healthy degree of out-of-the-box media and fan recognition. But the simple fact of the matter is that it's now been well over a decade since G'NR were at the top of their game, and even STP's glory days seem like they are fast becoming a distant memory. So while their platinum-covered success certainly hasn't been a surprise, it's been greeted by a major sigh of relief from the entire VR contingent.

"Success is something you *never* take for granted," McKagan said. "That's never been our style, anyway. We've never been very good at trying to play nice and fit in with everyone else. We've always been much better at rubbing everyone's face in the mud and just doing our own thing. This is a very dangerous band on a number of levels—and we may be the first dangerous band that's come along in a long time. Our goal is to go out there and cause as much chaos as possible."

Despite the fact that their core members are now precariously close to the age of 40, it seems as if little of their past "bad boy" reputation has disappeared with the passing years. Oh

BY TOM LINDGREN

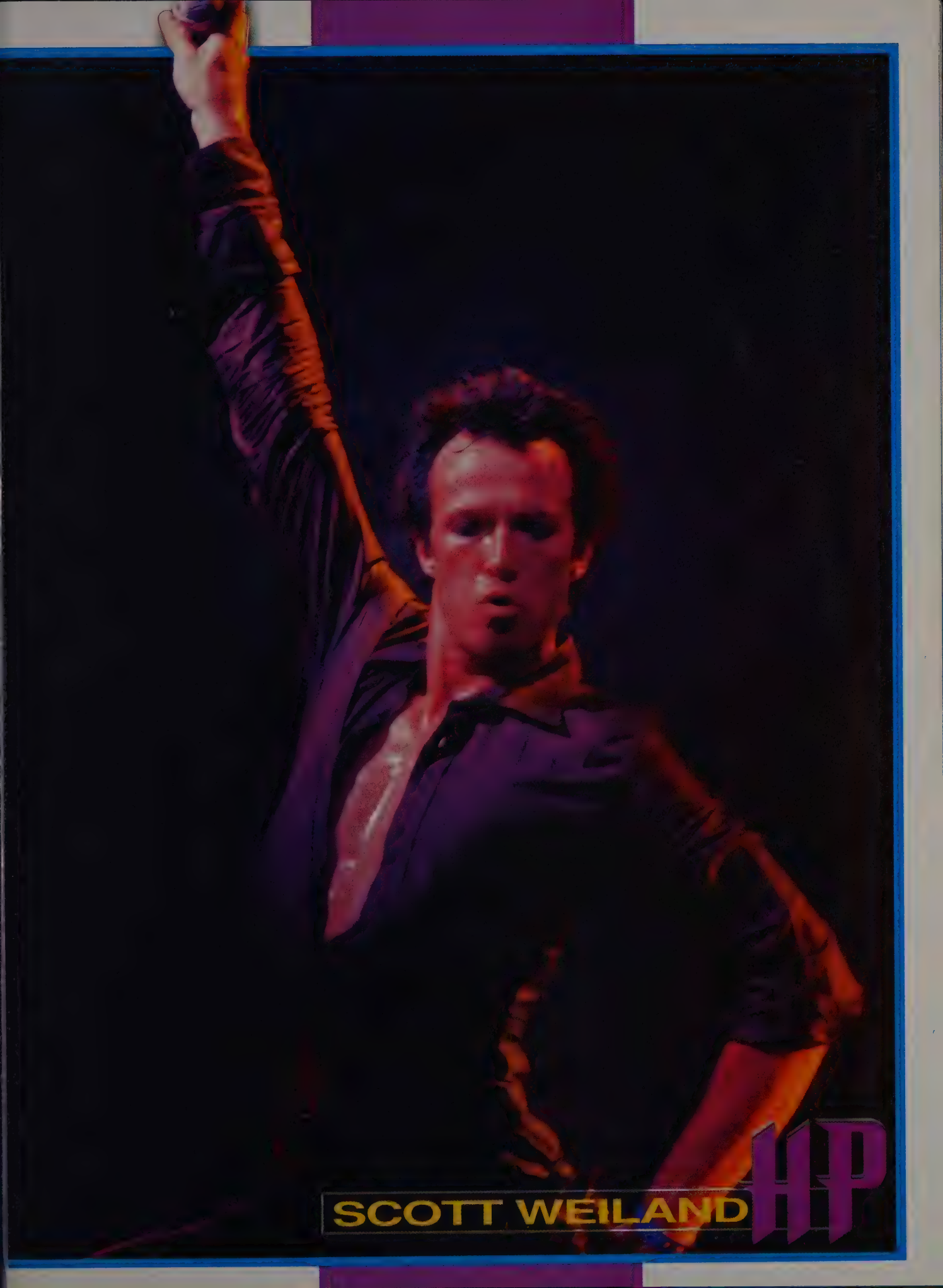
situation we've encountered with Velvet Revolver. Finding the right people to play with, and the right opportunity to present what you're doing isn't easy. So that's why I'm so excited about this band. This is my chance to make music that I enjoy with people who share my passion."

There's no denying that with the appearance of *Contraband*, and with the overwhelming success of their first world tour, Velvet Revolver has emerged as a true musical force. The hard-driving, yet eminently listenable brand of rock and roll fury created by this high-profile quintet has caused an unparalleled commotion in hard rock circles, and rightfully so! In many ways their debut disc may well be the best pure, straight-ahead hard rock album since (dare we say it) Guns 'N Roses' *Appetite for Destruction* was released nearly 15 years ago. And while the band members may offer bemused smiles when such a comparison is thrust in their face, they seem more-than-prepared to answer such a claim.

"It's all great rock and roll music, and rock and roll is timeless," Slash said. "It's not our job to compare what we're doing now with what we were doing then. But I take it as a great compliment. To me, it's when you develop the attitude that you've got to make music a certain way in order to fit in and keep up with everyone else that your music stands the chance of getting corrupted. Our focus has stayed on doing what we like—and what we feel comfortable doing—and

Revolter to their illustrious predecessors, or simply grooving to the band's hypnotic on-stage beat, millions of fans around the globe have already embraced VR as the potential "saviors" of the hard rock form. While this unit may not go out of their way to accept such a responsibility, neither do they shy away from it. Indeed, as their songs grow into anthems for this generation, and their tour stops become "must see" events for so many of their faithful admirers, it appears as if Velvet Revolver have lived up to—if not exceeded—all of the dreams and hopes that surrounded their emergence on the scene.

"We've each had our share of notoriety in the past," Weiland said. "But in many ways this represents a fresh start—a rebirth, if you will. When you're in a band for a number of years things just naturally change. Some of the excitement you may have initially felt begins to fade away. But in this band we've all been able to re-experience that excitement of first-time discovery. It's been really magical. People can accept this music for what it is—great rock and roll. It doesn't fit in that well with a lot of things you may be hearing on the radio. It doesn't *want* to fit in. Why should everything have to adapt to expectations? That doesn't make sense to me. We've all been quite successful over the years by developing something unique... not by fitting in."



SCOTT WEILAND

HP

"We took what we learned from our first album and applied it to this one."

BY PHILIP REESE

Two years can be a lifetime for a rock and roll band. The entire face of the music world can radically alter—leaving a terminally hip band hanging on for dear life. But the members of 12 Stones never really worried about being "cool", or trying to fit in. Indeed from the moment their self-titled debut disc was released in 2001, this Southern-fried unit always sensed that their timeless sense for rock and roll know-how would effectively allow them to defy trends and stand up to the shifting tides of popular music tastes. And now with the appearance of their second disc, **Potter's Field**, songwriter/vocalist Paul McCoy, guitarist Eric Weaver, bassist Kevin Dorr and drummer Aaron Gainer, seem better prepared than ever to prove that their special approach to the rock and roll craft is ready to yield a bumper crop of banner results for the unit known as 12 Stones.

"Like most bands, doing a first album is a major learning experience," McCoy said. "Hopefully, you can take what you pick up and apply it to what you do on the second album. We were lucky in that our first album was fairly successful. So that told us we were headed in the right direction. But we changed things up this time. This album doesn't present the 12 Stones that a lot of people might know. This is the 12 Stones you're about to know."

It's hard to deny McCoy's confidence in his band. After all, **12 Stones** sold over 300,000 copies—a great number for a rookie unit—and

McCoy upped his "Q Factor" by being the featured vocalist on Evanescence's break-out smash, *Bring Me To Life*. Indeed, it has been a smashing couple of years for this multi-talented rocker. But he knows all-too-well that none of his recent accomplishment mean a hill-o'-beans when it comes to guaranteed success for **Potter's Field**.

"We do something a little different in this band," he said. "Yeah, we scream and we're angry like a lot of other bands, but we also tell people to keep their heads up. For us, it's about writing great songs and conveying a message that there's a shared human experience that we all can relate to."

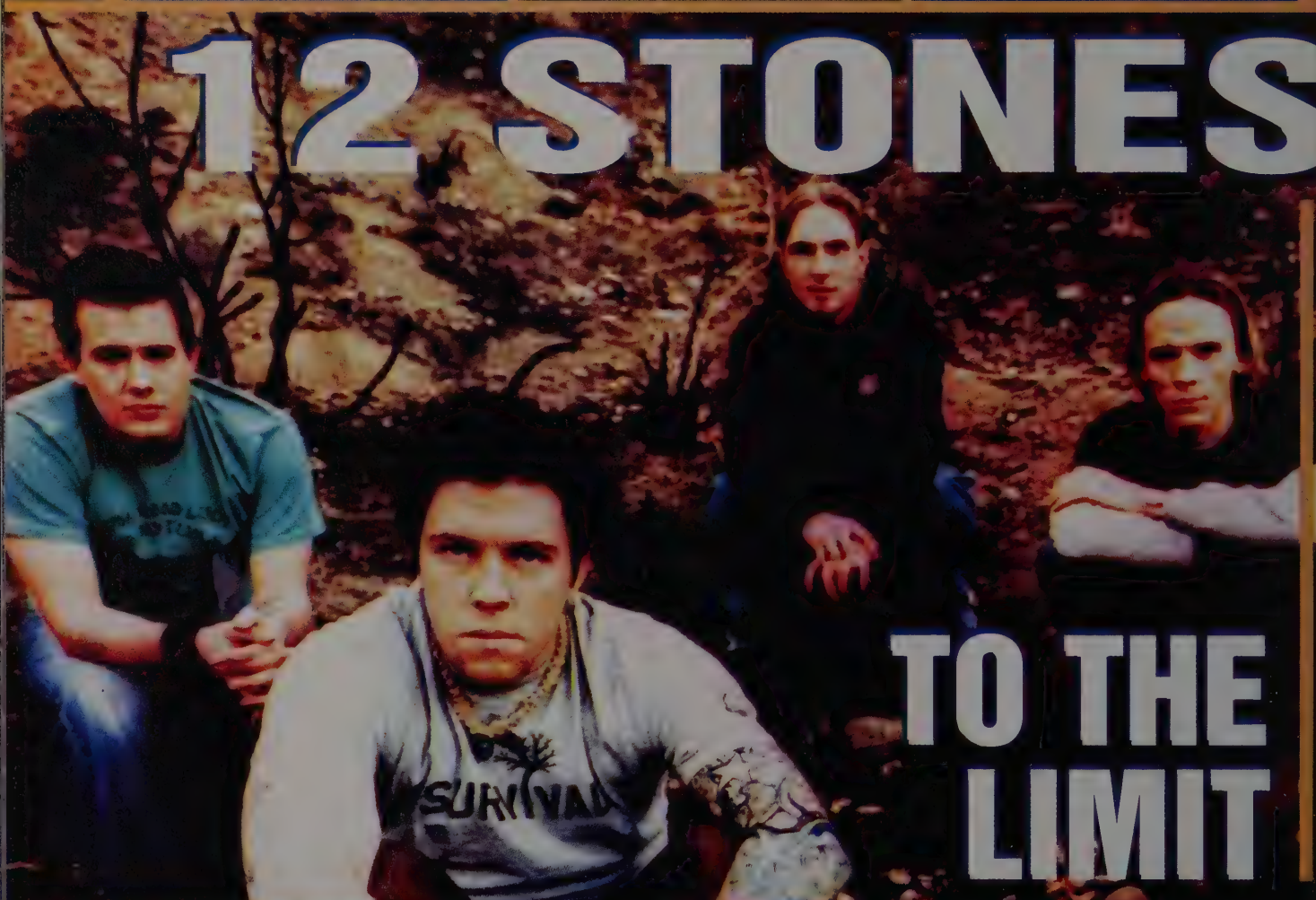
With the success of their sophomore disc, McCoy and his bandmates are once again hearing how their melodic metal band may end up being one of the break-out sensations of the year. They've heard how the group's heart-felt approach and rough-edged sound may help launch hard rock's latest commercial renaissance. And they've heard the seemingly never-ending comparisons made to many of the form's leading contemporary lights. But you know what? None of that has yet to truly impact the perspectives the 22-year-old McCoy. Despite all of the praise that's come his way, in many ways he remains just a wide-eyed kid straight from the streets of Mandeville, Louisiana.

"Mandeville is actually a suburb of New Orleans, so it's not like we're out in the middle of nowhere," McCoy said. "But at the same time, it's far enough outside of the city that it's developed its own music scene... if that's what you want to call it."

Perhaps it was their small town roots that allowed 12 Stones to develop their own sound. Such songs as *Shadows*, *The Last Song* and *Speak Your Mind* bristle with a distinctive energy and a well-structured power. But underlying it all is a rock-solid sense of songwriting style, and an unmistakable we-know-what-we're-doing instrumental elan. Despite their tender ages, on **Potter's Field** the members of 12 Stones seem to have a sense of self-assuredness that belies their limited experience.

"The album title comes from where they bury a lot of people who have no friends or family," McCoy said. "A lot of times, that's the way you feel as a musician. You're out there, exposing your heart and soul, and you're still very anonymous to a lot of people. Some of that has to do with how and where I grew up. I lot of what I write has to do with the tough times I had while growing up. I think that a lot of people who hear our music can relate to that in their own way. But I don't want to come across as negative and whiney. There's too much of that already. I think there's a way of taking negative energy and stream it back at people in a positive way."

12 STONES

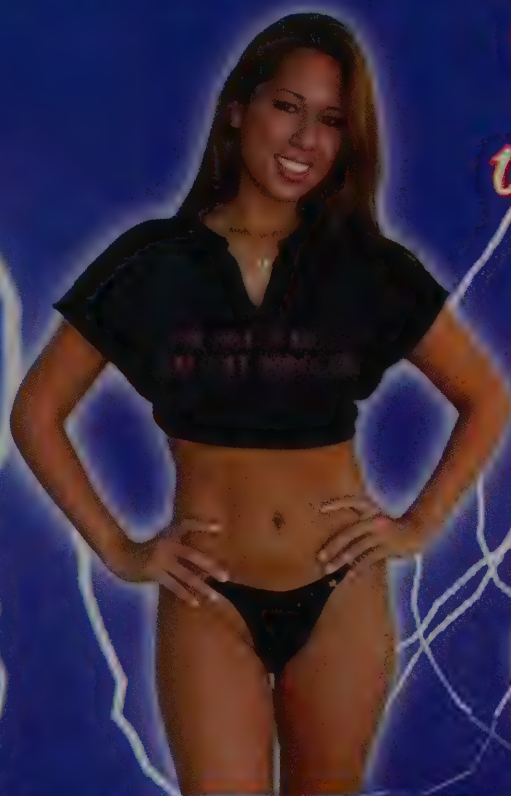


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In many ways it seems as if System of a Down has been kicking around the rock and roll scene forever. After all, it has been nearly a decade since this Armenian/American first joined forces to change the face of contemporary music society. And during that time the band's radical stance and in-your-face musical attitude has turned them into one of the most prominent, and successful, of current hard rock proponents. But the fact of the matter is that during their time in the spotlight vocalist Serj Tankian, bassist Shavo Odadjian, drummer John Dolmayan and guitarist Daron Malakian have only released two "official" studio discs— 1997's **System of a Down** and 2001's **Toxicity**— along with one "odds and sods" collection, 2002's **Steal This Album**. Indeed, it's hard to believe that this ever-ambitious West Coast unit has achieved so much, and created such a lasting impact, with such minimal album production.

"It's never been about the number of songs we write," Tankian said. "It's about how good those songs are. When we get together to write music, everything comes along with us. We bring our influences, our attitudes of-the-moment, and perhaps some issues we want to get off our chests. It's a very cathartic experience. I wouldn't say that we set out to intentionally push any limits just to do so—it's more that we're there to push ourselves into making music that is different and exciting. If by doing that we end up touching on some new areas, then that's fine. Much like everything else in life, rock music needs to continually evolve. If we can be one of the causes for that evolutionary process to move forward, then we'd be very satisfied."

It is that evolutionary-meets-revolutionary ideal that has come to symbolize the System of a Down sound. And that is also why so many million around the globe are currently on the edge of their seats waiting for the band to finish

are personal songs that discuss experiences that have confronted us at one time or another in our lives. Other discuss more universal topics. I hope that we do open some eyes with the songs we present—but we don't approach any song or any issue simply for shock value. We want to bring strong emotions out of people, and that's what our songs attempt to do."

Drawing out strong emotions from their rabid following of fans seems to be one of this unit's greatest strengths. And they also seem to have a unique knack for knowing just how deeply they can prick society's skin before drawing significant blood. Once again on their new album this unit promises that they will take dead aim at a wide variety of cutting edge targets. And it's our bet that this band's unerring skill will strike the heart of more than one unsuspecting foe.

"We write about what we believe, and what we believe to be important," Malakian said. "We don't set out with an agenda in mind. We let our instincts direct us, and that's what's happened on the new album."

Hopefully soon everyone in and around the System camp will stop referring to the band's latest opus as the "new album" and actually call it by a proper title. One might think that a band like System of a Down—in which it seems everything from album cover design to the off-beat patterns that adorn their concert-T-shirts is controlled by the band members— would

SYSTEM OF A-DOWN TAKING THE IR=TIME

BY PATRICK JAMES

"We push ourselves to make music that's different and exciting."

work on their still-untitled new disc. Working—as always—at their own pace, the band would love to have the disc out by the end of 2004. But as you often seems to be the case with SOAD, they offer only one promise: the album will be finished... when it is finished.

"We never set out to take a long time to make our albums," Malakian said. "It just seems to turn out that way. We started work on this one back in January, and things have moved along very well since then. But there are always new ideas coming up— things we feel compelled to try. If that delays us a bit, that's the way it has to be. We accept that, and we hope our fans do as well."

Whether their album arrives in time for the Holiday season, or it arrives early in '05, there's no way of avoiding the fact that System of a Down have arrived. With the world-wide acclaim afforded their albums, videos and stage shows, this politically-savvy, ever-unpredictable and eminently heavy West Coast unit have established themselves as one of the most important groups currently at work within the heavy metal universe. For this quixotic quartet the release of their latest effort will unquestionably solidify SOAD's already strong foothold in the upper echelon of heavy metal society. In fact, with the current dearth of inspired, insightful, inciteful rock units, it now seems as if System has already assumed the mantle of being hard rock's most outspoken and controversial polit-rock unit.

"I don't want to think that any song we write is something that can be listened to and then easily dismissed," Tankian said. "We do find it a lot more interesting writing about subjects that excite us or anger us than just common-place things. Many

have something as relatively basic as an album title as a top priority. But as Tankian explained, that isn't always the case.

"It's strange how doing some of the more basic things— like coming up with an album title, or merely deciding which songs should make it onto the album— prove to be the most difficult things you do. There are so many considerations that run through your head at that time—you want to make sure you've chosen the best title, but it's also got to be something that works in conjunction with the entire album."

Having sold in excess of 12 million copies of their first three releases, the SOAD crew know that they have a large, voracious and vociferous audience out there waiting to be entertained by their latest efforts. Such pressure has served to stifle the creative flow of many previous bands. But that certainly doesn't appear to be the fate of System of a Down. They may fret and worry about the contents of their upcoming disc. But its sales status never seems to enter the forefront of their thought processes.

"You just can't spend time thinking about things like that," Tankian said. "It's one of those elements that goes hand-in-hand with this business. But we don't try to focus on it. We believe that our attention needs to be on the music. If we do our job, and make a great album, then we trust that the other people we work with will do their jobs and get it out to where everyone can hear it."



SERJ TANKIAN

HP

The last few months have certainly been a busy time for Mudvayne's Chad Gray. In addition to helping his heavily metallic unit complete work on their third album, the ambitious frontman has

been hard at work putting the finishing touches on his own label, Billygoat Records. Indeed, he has already inked his first band, New York-based hard rock act Bloodsimple, and if his current actions provide a true indicator, Gray plans on keeping his hectic schedule going for a long, long time to come.

"Bloodsimple opened a show for Mudvayne last year, and I was immediately blown away," Gray said. "They had everything you look for in a band—great songs, great playing and a lot of on-stage energy. They had the audience eating out of the palm of their hand by the time they left the stage, and I know as well as anyone how tough that can be—especially when you're a young band. I figured they'd be the perfect type of group to help launch Billygoat Records, which is the fulfillment of a dream for me. I've always

"It's time for us to really push things to the limit."

MUDVAYNE

PROVING THEIR METTLE

BY STEVE LEWIS

wanted to do this; it's a great way for me to help friends and worthy musicians. Hopefully I can help them avoid some of the mistakes that I made early in my career."

With the launch of Billygoat Records, Gray has indeed fulfilled one of his life's goals, creating a label designed to present deserving, young talent. Next on his agenda is taking Mudvayne—the unit he shares with guitarist Greg Tribbett, bassist Ryan Martinie and drummer Matt McDonough—to the very apex of the metal kingdom. The band has come oh-so-close to attaining superstar status with each of their first two releases, *L.D. 50* and *The End of All Things to Come*. But everyone involved realizes that their next outing—which was recently completed, with Dave Fortman at the production helm—may well serve as the make-or-break album in Mudvayne's career.

"This album is very important for us on a lot of levels," Gray said. "There's no question that you need to grow up as a band by the time you make your third album. People know who you are, and they have certain expectations of you. Well, this time we did our best to turn those expectations inside out. We blew away any preconceived notions that people may have about the way Mudvayne is supposed to sound, look or act. This album is just so incredibly intense. You listen to it, and your brain starts to hurt."

With that highly disturbing image implanted in our cerebellum, perhaps it's time that we all give this new, improved version of Mudvayne a little extra, *Hit Parader*-style analysis. This time around, the band has taken the rather radical step of choosing to place substance over style. They've cast aside the outrageous costumes and makeup that characterized their earlier attempts at stardom, and placed attention squarely on the music they've created. And it is that music—a rugged blend of

industrial-strength rhythms, mathematically precise riffs and thought-provoking lyrics—that Gray promises will open eyes and ears unlike anything that the Wayne has previously presented to the rock and roll masses.

"When we began writing for this album, we just sequestered ourselves away from any distractions and poured everything we had into the music and the lyrics," he said. "It's made a big difference. We've grown as people and as a band so much over the last few years. There's still the same off-center sensibility that we've always had, but now the focus has been narrowed and made more intense. There was a need for us to grow. That required certain things be altered in order for that growth to occur. We're not turning our back on our past, but embracing it in a different way."

Apparently, at least in

the perspectives of this unit's four members, there was need to shake up Mudvayne's approach in a radical way. It's not that the band wasn't successful, it was more an issue of the inherent power and sophistication of Mudvayne's music being continually overshadowed by the over-the-top nature of the band's outrageously theatrical appearance. So last June, as the rockers formerly known as Chug, Gugg, Spag and Ru-D began planning the details for their latest album, they knew that it was time to take the key components of the Mudvayne sound and radically expand upon them. Working with the aforementioned Fortman (whose previous endeavors have included studio time with the likes of Superjoint Ritual and Evanescence),

"This album is so important for us on a lot of levels."

Mudvayne worked to reinvent themselves while retaining every-

thing that their fans had grown to know and love.

"We felt Dave Fortman was the perfect producer for us with this album because he seemed to have a true understanding of our music," Gray said. "He knows he has a lot to live up to because we've already worked with some amazing producers. Garth Richardson produced our first album, and he did a lot to capture our raw energy. David Bottrill worked on our second album and he was amazing at getting a very three-dimensional sound for us. With Dave, we wanted to capture both of those elements... and then add new ones. This time, we wanted to make sure that the music was simultaneously brutal and beautiful."

This time around Mudvayne were determined to take as much time as required in order to attain all of their musical goals. The group initially chose to retreat to a secluded ranch in Northern California, where they knew the distractions would be at a minimum and their ability to focus would be at a maximum. After three months of writing, they moved to a Vancouver recording studio where the bulk of their new disc was laid down. It was a time-consuming process, but as they now look back on their completed work, the members of Mudvayne sense that every second was worth it.

"The degree of focus we had with this album was incredible," Gray said.

"Sometimes the sheer amount of creativity that we have can be a bit of a burden—and a bit of a distraction. It can draw you in so many directions, and you want to at least explore almost all of them. This time we knew that it would be better if we left at least a few stones unturned. It was the only way to channel our energy and have it continually hit the intended target."

Chad Gray:
Music mogul.

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Pearl

"Projekt Revolution allows us to bring together all types of music for the fans."

Leave it to Linkin Park to wake things up and shake things up in their own inimitable fashion. Never a unit tied down by the rules of rock and roll convention or limited by the bounds of mainstream "acceptability", this groundbreaking, chart-topping, precedent-shattering rap/metal unit has once again shown the music world that it's perfectly okay to think radically outside the proverbial box. With the launch of the third annual version of their highly successful *Projekt Revolution* tour, Mike Shinoda (vocals), Chester Bennington (vocals), Brad Delson (guitar), Joseph Hahn (keyboards), Phoenix (bass) and Rob Bourdon (drums) have once again proven that a band can do things their own way while delighting fans from coast to coast in the process.

While some long-time observers of the rock scene may still scoff at the notion of bands from diametrically different wings of the modern music spectrum all performing together in one place at one time, that has always seemed perfectly natural to the LP pack. By bringing such diverse cultural forces as metal heroes Korn, rap legend Snoop Dog and punk/alternative upstarts The Used and Less than Jake under one all-inclusive touring package, Linkin Park has taken concepts previously presented by such tours as *Ozzfest* and *Family Values* and magnified them past the point of immediate recognition... or comparison.

"This tour stands alone and apart," Bennington said. "For us, *Projekt Revolution* presents the opportunity for us to bring together different kinds of bands as well as all types of music and music fans. We don't place any sort of limitations on it—the only 'restriction' is if the music is good. If it is, then it's welcome, no matter how different it may be from what our fans perceive our music as being. The best part is that our fans expect us to try something different, and for the most part, they embrace it."

There's no denying that the 2004 *Projekt Revolution* program covers an amazingly wide swath of contemporary music ideals. With a second stage lineup replete with the likes of eclectic rapper Ghostface, hardcore rockers Downset and U.K. upstarts Funeral for a Friend, it seems that any lingering lines that may serve to separate the rock, rap and metal kingdoms are destined to be torn asunder by tour's end. The Linkin Park boys understand that not everyone may be as willing as they are to embrace all the varying kinds of music that currently inhabit the rock family tree. But at the same time, they believe their efforts towards promoting better understanding between these differing rock factions will serve to further solidify the contemporary music front during the upcoming years.

"This tour is hopefully going to appeal to music fans who have very open minds," Delson said. "The idea of limiting your taste to one type of music or another is very

dated as far as we're concerned. You've got to open your eyes, ears and mind to as many exciting possibilities as possible. Perhaps you need eclectic tastes to really like everything on this tour, but I'm not even sure about that. I hope that today people with wide-ranging tastes are the norm... and those are the people attracted to *Projekt Revolution*."

True to their "pull out all the stops" philosophy, in addition to presenting a full day's worth of culture-clashing music on two stages, the members of Linkin Park have made sure that their latest *Projekt Revolution* outing has even more to satisfy their fan's ever-more eclectic cravings. At each and every event, a *Revolution Village* will be set up, featuring a series of interactive exhibits presented by a variety of the tour's event partners. There will be a Wild Ride Fly Faster test drive, along with a special *Access to The Show* presentation made by Major League Baseball Properties. These, along with many other entertainment extras, promise to make each and every *Projekt Revolution* tour stop a show worthy of remembering for a long, long time.

"The whole point of *Projekt Revolution* is to make sure that the fans walk away from it with a big smile on their faces," Bennington said. "That was our primary ambition from the very beginning. These days, things can be so expensive, and there are so many options available for your leisure-time dollar. That's why we knew that we had to make this whole tour something truly special—something that people would remember long after the music stopped ringing in their ears."

For Linkin Park the *Projekt Revolution*

tour culminates what has been a dizzying two-year run for this Los Angeles based unit. It was back in 2002 that the band released their second disc, *Meteora*, their follow-up to Y2K's multi-million selling smash, *Hybrid Theory*. Combined, those two discs have now sold in excess of 25 million copies world-wide, marking Linkin Park as the most commercially successful hard rock band of their era... and one of the most successful of all time. Since the release of *Meteora*, the group has been riding in the eye of a virtual non-stop rock and roll hurricane—one that has seen them traverse the globe on numerous occasions, and bring their high-octane sound in front of tens-of-thousands of adoring fans on a nightly basis. But with the end of *Projekt Revolution* also comes the inevitable termination of this particular recording/touring cycle.

"Yup, this will be it in terms of the *Meteora* cycle," Shinoda said. "But that doesn't mean we're going to stop... or even slow down. We've already got a number of ideas together that are destined for the next album, and I'm sure we'll get around to the studio before too much more time passes. But we're going to take our time in the studio, so it may be quite a while before anyone sees us on the road again."

"People always ask me why we work so hard," Bennington added. "The only thing I can ever think of to answer that is to say that we love what we do, so it doesn't really seem like work. The way I look at it, we get on stage and perform for free, what people pay us for are all the hours we have to sit in airports and hotels waiting to get on stage and have a lot of fun."

LINKIN
BY DAVID VOLKER
PARK

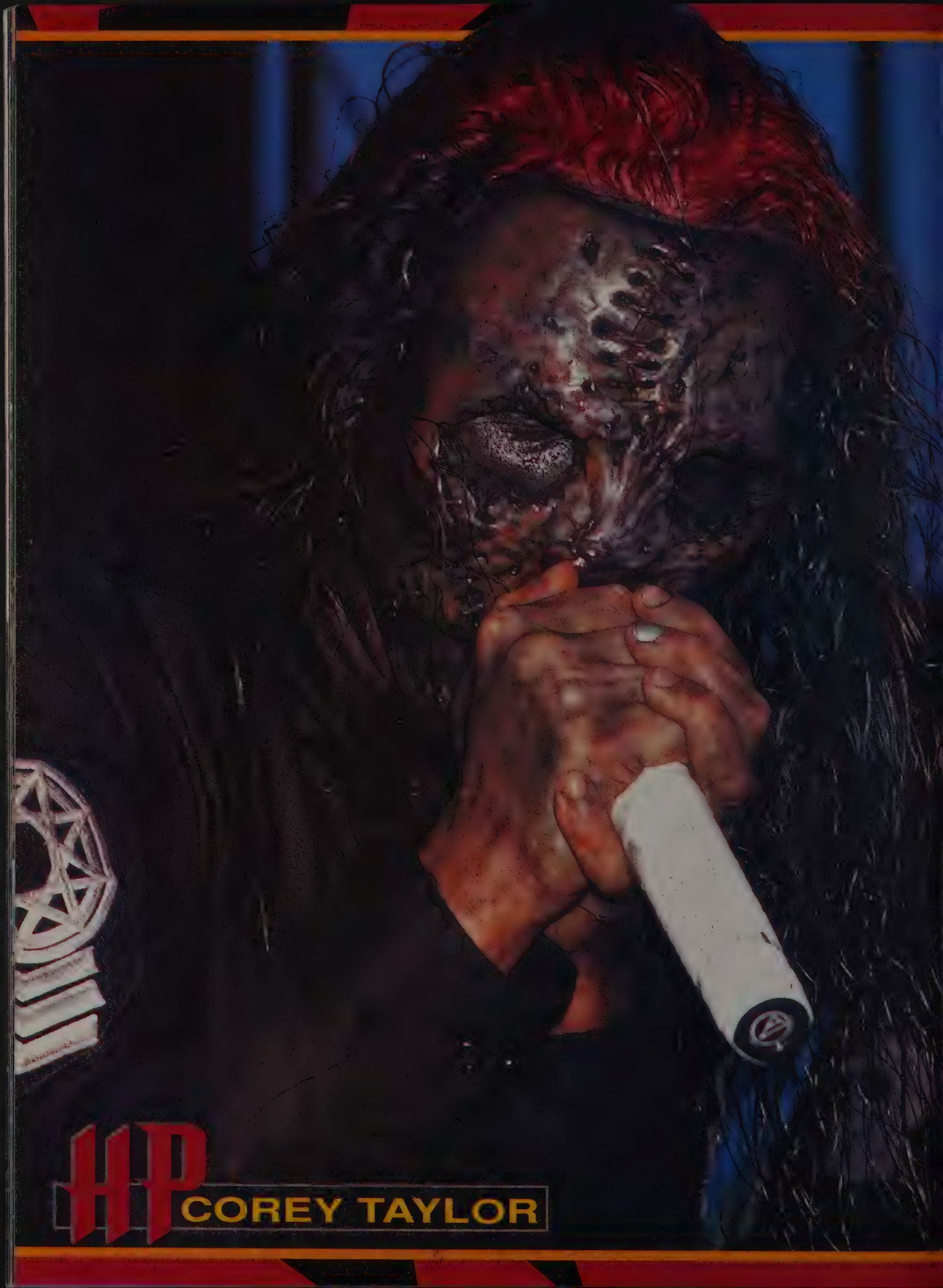
GOING FOR BROKE

PHOTO: EDDIE MALLUK



MIKE SHINODA





HP COREY TAYLOR

A

fter dominating the heavy metal scene for significant parts of the last six years, in late 2004 Slipknot find themselves at yet another career crossroads. Their latest disc, **Vol. 3 (The Subliminal Verses)** has proven to be a best-selling smash. Their various tours—ranging from *Ozzfest* to their own headlin-

ing gigs—have been sold-out sensations. But just as early-year talk of “breakup” and “dissension” begins to fade, the members of this midwestern metal unit realize that it’s time to begin facing what lies next in their burgeoning careers. Sometime in 2005 d.j. Sid Wilson, drummer Joey Jordison, bassist Paul Gray, percussionist Chris Fehn, guitarist James Root, sampler Craig Jones, percussionist Shawn Crahan, guitarist Mick Thomson and vocalist Corey Taylor (0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8) will most likely need to decide whether to keep the Knot steamroller chugging along or take another break from their chart-topping unit in order to pursue their outside interests.

It’s certainly no secret to Slipknot fans that the surprising degree of 2003 success enjoyed by Jordison’s Murderdolls and the Taylor/Root project, Stone Sour, almost drove a knife into the heart of the Knot. And it is to those groups that these diverse rockers will return.

sooner or later. The key question now becomes whether this nine-man mutant metal army can keep their recently realigned internal harmony in working order for yet another studio album and tour before so many of its members once again scatter to the proverbial hills.

“Don’t even try to ask me that,” Taylor said with a smile. “That is not the subject for the moment. Everyone knows that I love Stone Sour, and that Joey loves the Murderdolls, but right now that’s not where our focus is.”

Okay, so maybe all things *will* work out for the Knot as they gaze into the rock and roll crystal ball that will determine their future. Certainly things have gone better than many within the music industry had recently predicted (both on a commercial and personal level) for this coverall-wear-

ing, mask-bearing contingent. In the early stages of 2004 all talk seemed to center on this band’s internal strife rather than on the fact that Slipknot still had the know-how and the desire to help catapult themselves and the entire heavy metal empire back into the spotlight of public acclaim. Now, almost a year later, few of those detractors can still be found.

“I think we silenced a lot of the people who were questioning us,” Jordison said. “And we did it the right way—by making a great album and then touring our asses off.”

It now seems almost laughable to consider the notion of a heavy metal world devoid of Slipknot. The fact is that just saying the word “Slipknot” to a generation of rock and roll fans is enough to send them into a state of near-frenzy. Whether it’s the strange masks they

wear, the powerful, hypnotic quality of the music they play, or the overwhelming aura that this intimidating musical strike force projects, Slipknot have now further established themselves to become one of the most amazing success stories of hard rock history. Perhaps it’s because of the trials and tribulations they survived. Perhaps it’s because of the derision with which their music is still met by those who simply don’t “get it.” But whatever the reason may be, with their triumphant return via **Vol. 3**, the tale of the Des Moines Nine has become the stuff of metal legend.

What is it about this decidedly different unit that has once again captured the imagination of the contemporary music world? While that answer may appear to be as blatant as the band’s bone-jarring sound, it is actually a complex and often compelling subject. Both on-stage and off, Slipknot create a scene that is a distorted blend of side-show craziness and horror-movie insanity. With their bizarre array of self-made masks, their matching uniforms and their highly-charged musical

sound, Slipknot have now completely rewritten the rule books of rock and roll acceptability. In many ways, they have become the quintessential metal band of the 21st Century.

“We’re always trying not to get too caught up on all the stuff that’s going on around us,” Crahan said. “It’s all very exciting, and we’ve enjoyed every second of it. But we’ve always refused to believe that we’re Rock Stars—and we certainly don’t want to start acting that way.”

From the moment in 1998 that they were “discovered,” the Knot have exuded a special affinity for relating to the most basic instincts of the entire heavy metal community. They’ve never been media faves, and even the forces at MTV and rock radio have often seemed intimidated by the group’s unconventional approach. Yet this decidedly different unit has still managed to solidify their position as the flag-bearers of the 21st Century metal revolution.

They’ve had their albums become the “standard” against which all young shock rock attractions are measured. And they’ve seen their tours become the most in-demand shows in the hard rock world.

With such overwhelming success, however, have come a slew of questions. Magazines (including this one) that routinely featured

Slipknot on the cover only a few months ago, have also begun to examine the band’s commitment and internal chemistry. And fans who proudly brandish the group’s latest T-shirt designs as a badge

of honor, now wonder if their favorite band will even exist a year or two from now. It is an undeniable fact of rock and roll life that artists who choose to push the limits—whether those limits be artistic or theatrical—tend to meet increased resistance during their subsequent go-rounds the rock world. Some groups survive such treatment, some do not. But considering all that Slipknot has already been forced to endure in order to simply reach their present status in the rock world, it seems unimaginable that this like-minded unit would now let anything deter them from their self-appointed task of spreading their musical message to every corner of the planet.

“We’ve never let what others think impact our way of looking at things,” Taylor said. “There are nine of us involved in every decision—that’s enough to think about right there.”

KINGS OF THE ROAD

BY P.J. MERKLE

“We’ve silenced the people who were questioning us.”

“We’ve never let what others think impact our way of looking at things.”

“Everyone knows that I love Stone Sour, and that Joey loves the Murderdolls, but right now that’s not where our focus is.”

For many members of the heavy metal community, Judas Priest's appearance at *Ozzfest 2004* may have been their first opportunity to see this legendary unit in all of its leather-wearing, Harley riding glory. Indeed, one would have to hark back over a dozen years to find the last time that vocalist Rob Halford, bassist Ian Hill and guitarists K.K. Downing and Glenn Tipton stood together on stage creating the kind of metallic mayhem that is uniquely theirs. For those old enough to recall Priest's halcyon days, this long-awaited reformation can't

help but put a knowing smile on their faces. And for those too young to fully grasp Priest's special place in the metal pantheon, their on-stage performances have been a loud and proud reminder of exactly why they were, are and will always be the inimitable Priest Beast.

It's now been 30 years since Judas Priest first made their mark on the international metal community. Rising out of Birmingham, England, as a "second generation" metal band spawned in the wake of the incredible success of Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple and Black Sabbath, Priest streamlined and bastardized the musical approaches utilized by their predecessors, in the process creating a new, far more blatant, musical hybrid. While doing so, they virtually eliminated the blues flavorings of Zep, the classical overtones of Purple and the Satanic seasonings of the Sabs, preferring to highlight three-chord riffs, surprisingly accessible melodies and a gut wrenching vocal approach to create a style that quickly made Priest the ultimate metal machine.

Quite simply, Priest had picked up the gauntlet cast down by their hard rocking predecessors and proceeded to carry it to commercial heights never before imagined. Back then, Priest was the state-of-the-art metal monster. Their dual lead guitarists effectively reinvented the roles played by six string masters within a band structure, while Halford brought an almost operatic approach to his craft that no other vocalist could match. Their tours filled arenas, their albums sold millions, while songs like *Living After Midnight* and *Breaking The Law* became anthems for a generation of denim-n-leather faithful.

In fact, there are many long-time observers of the heavy metal realm who insist that Judas Priest remains the finest practitioner of the head-banging style ever to bluster their way down the rock and roll highway. Their line of reasoning is so simple it becomes almost irrefutable. It is their belief that in style, substance and approach, the Priest Beast managed to disseminate the most basic and fundamental of metallic ingredients and meld them into a single, overwhelming musical entity. They took the raw fundamentals of hard rock and simply did away with any "unnecessary" excess. What remained was pure metallic mayhem...the music of Judas Priest. Throughout the '80s, Priest ruled supreme as the quintessential hard rock band, a black leather loving, motorcycle riding, hell-bent for metal unit that managed to rise from humble beginnings to release a series of platinum discs including *Screaming For Vengeance*, *British Steel* and *Turbo Lover* that served to revolutionize the entire rock and roll empire.

By the late '80s, however, the Priest heavy metal machine had begun to run out of steam. While they were still worshipped by both a loyal horde of fans around the world, as well as by an upcoming generation of rock bands that had been weaned on Priest's unrelenting approach, Halford had begun to lose interest in what he perceived as the group's "predictable" style. Following a series of more experimental metal albums that attempted to update and re-energize the Priest sound, Halford promptly quit the band in 1992. The remaining Priest members felt left somewhat high and dry. After all, Halford had been their frontman for more than 15 years. As Tipton recalled, the band wasn't sure exactly where to turn.

"There was a period of indecision," he admitted. "We didn't know if Rob was going to stick to his decision to leave the band or not. We didn't know whether to look for a new singer or just wait. But in the mean time Ken [Downing] and I started writing more songs. Soon it became apparent that Rob had no

intention of rejoining us, and things evolved from there."

So for the next dozen years both Halford and Priest wandered through the metal "wilder-ness"—both recording and touring, yet both mere shadows of their former greatness. Then in late 2003 word began to emerge that the one and only *original* Priest Beast was set to reform to celebrate their three decades of metal mayhem. A massive box-set compilation, fittingly entitled *Metalogy*, was carefully constructed, and when it was announced that the band would co-headline *Ozzfest* (with fellow Birmingham rockers, Black Sabbath) the metal world rejoiced. Now having proved that they still have what it takes upon the concert stage, the world anxiously awaits to hear the band's new studio disc.

"The album is truly amazing," Halford said. "All the energy and excitement that we feel about being back together has managed to find its way directly into the songs we've been writing. We haven't played any of the new songs yet because we believe that these live dates are a celebration of our 30 years as a band. But I promise that everyone will get a taste of what we've been up to soon enough."

For three decades they've ruled the heavy metal world with an iron-fisted intensity that has set the standards against which all pretenders to their throne have been measured. On album after album they've continually reestablished the fact that no band has ever played metal with more panache, power and style. Now it's time for Judas Priest to prove their metal worth all over again. No band has ever seemed more prepared for such a challenge. With Halford securely ensconced back within the Priest's framework, this legendary unit seems ready, able and willing to once again show why few others can hold a proverbial candle to their metallic power.

"This album is something that's been on our minds for quite a while," Downing said. "It's obviously a very exciting project because it signifies something so special for us—the return of the classic Priest lineup. It's amazing to hear what we're doing now, the music has definitely taken on a new life. People who are truly familiar with what Priest has been throughout the years will be amazed."

"There was an instant bond as soon as we all got together."

BY ERIC NASH

ROARING BACK

JUDAS PRIEST



ROB HALFORD

JP

KORN

HIT SQUAD

BY P.J. MERKLE

Korn's Jonathan Davis offers a wry smile when asked why at this particular moment in rock and roll history his legendary hard rock band has decided to release a Greatest Hits compilation. Perhaps the vocalist's answer must be somewhat guarded, for while there is obviously a great demand for having all of this influential unit's pace-setting hits crammed onto one disc, recent industry scuttlebutt indicates that part of the reason for this "best of" set is to help Korn complete their current record label contractual commitment. Indeed, the vocalist has stated his belief that at some point in the not-so-distant future, the entire music industry as we know it will need to go through a major transformation if it wants to survive, and as usual Korn will most likely be at the forefront of this radical change.

"This whole industry is hurting right now," Davis said. "There are so many changes happening at every label, yet they always seem to be a little behind what's happening, whether it's on the internet or where ever. That's all got to change."

The fact remains, however, that no matter what Korn's primary motivation may be for releasing their latest disc, the album does celebrate a decade of taste-making, trend-changing work from this Bakersfield-based unit. For some-long time observers of the hard rock scene, it may be hard to believe that ten years have now passed since Korn first put their stamp on the contemporary music world. At the time of their arrival back in 1994, it's safe to say that the rock and roll kingdom was in a state of shambles. The metal movement of the late '80s was long dead, and the strident strains of early '90s grunge had come to a premature demise with the passing of Kurt Cobain. The hard rock world was searching for direction, waiting for some new heroes to come along and give the form a new sense of purpose. Into that void stepped Jonathan Davis, James "Munky" Shaffer, Brian "Head" Welch, David Silveria and Fieldy to help save the day.

"The 'secret' to what we do has always been kind of simple," David said. "We like to take a lot of things that may seem chaotic when you look at them separately and then throw them all together. It may appear to be all messed up, but when it all comes together you can end up with something that's really different and really good. That's the way the great bands that influenced us always did it"

One of the way that the Kornsters have tipped their caps to their influences on their Greatest Hits package is by adding some clas-

sic cover tunes to the music mix. On their new collection, the band has recorded Pink Floyd's *Another Brick In The Wall* along with Public Enemy's *Fight The Power*, two tunes that not only made a major impact on the group's members, but show the diversity of influences that have helped mold Korn into one of the last decade's most important bands.

"Pink Floyd is one of those bands that I always loved," Davis said. "And *The Wall* is both an amazing album and an amazing movie. I'm very influenced by visual images, and seeing that movie had a huge impact on me. So in some ways this is our way of saluting an amazing band and an amazing album."

Despite the wide-spread speculation concerning Korn's current status with their label, there's no denying the pleasure the group has derived from the success of their latest disc. This time around the charismatic Davis seems to be drawing a particular thrill from having all of his unit's best-known and best-loved tunes—from *Got the Life* to *Freak on a Leash*—in one specific place. Indeed, it seems safe to say that few bands in rock history have ever enjoyed a more exciting, ambitious and satisfying career than this West Coast unit, and with **Greatest Hits Vol. 1**, they have shown exactly why their music has made such a dramatic impact on so many musical lives.

"We always feel we have it in us to really do something special," the singer said. "Every time we've gone into the recording studio our goals have been to take everything we had learned in the past and put it to use. We're always going to make something that we're really proud of."

As one might have guessed, Davis' enthusiasm towards Korn's Greatest Hits collection has been shared almost universally by the usually cynical members of the rock hierarchy. While critics previously railed against Korn's hyperactive style and seemingly non-syncopated rhythms, it seems like everyone is finally "getting" what this band has been trying to do. The press has uniformly lauded their hits collection as Korn's

crowning glory, citing the band's collective works as a landmark achievement in the melding of diverse rock and roll elements—a field that Korn helped pioneer on discs like *Life Is Peachy* and *Follow the Leader*.

As shown on virtually every one of their instantly familiar hits, this group has shown that hard rock need not recognize any of the artificial artistic boundaries that served to hamper the musical diversity of so many earlier rock generations. Rather than sitting back and taking all their current good fortune in stride, however, the Kornsters remain primed and ready to take full advantage of every opportunity that comes their way. There's already talk of the group releasing a live album/DVD set sometime in 2005, and a variety of new industry-related possibilities are currently being explored by the band's ever-hungry members.

"We like what we do, so we just keep doing it," Davis said. "We don't need a vacation from this...this *is* our vacation. Yeah, we're looking into some new things to keep us busy. But they all kind of go hand-in-hand with one another. It's just like our music."

Being just a little bit different has come very naturally to the members of Korn. From the day they first got signed, it's been clear that this unit was intent on breaking down just about any barrier placed in their path. Being unconventional in look, sound and attitude was never something these guys had to work on—it just came with the territory. And now, with the incredible success they continue to enjoy, it seems as if Korn are perfectly positioned to keep leading the hard rock form's evolutionary development.

"We're never in any particular hurry," Davis said. "We want to do everything and see everything. That's part of the fun. We've learned you just can't rush things. You've got to let them happen at their own pace."

"Pink Floyd meant a great deal to me when I was growing up."



JONATHAN DAVIS

HP

THE YEAR IN

So what were the Big Stories of the Heavy Metal World in 2004? Black Sabbath celebrating their 35th Anniversary. A reunited Judas Priest commemorating 30 years of metal mastery. Slipknot

selling more than a million copies of their latest dose of metallic mayhem. Upstarts like Jet, the Darkness and even new "supergroups" like Alter Bridge and Velvet Revolver simultaneously saluting rock's past while blazing a path for the form's future. Underground bands like Lamb of God and Atreyu making their mark on the mainstream. There you have it... the Metal Story of 2004 in less than 100 words!

But, in all honesty, it's not our job to summarize events as important as these into just a few words. It's our job to wallow in the intricacies of these important musical happenings and translate their inner-meaning and societal impact for millions around the globe. And trust us when we tell you, we take such a responsibility *very* seriously. So much happened in 2004 that it may well take us *forever* to properly disseminate everything that occurred over the last year. Indeed, the previous 12 months may well go down among the most notable, exciting and enjoyable periods in the history of hard rock.

Just a few years after so many so-called pundits had predicted that heavy metal was dead, the form proved to be not only alive, but one of the most vibrant commercial and artistic forces on earth. Such stellar attractions as Slipknot, Linkin Park, Korn, Staind, Kittie, Mudvayne and Saliva further established their chart-topping, arena-filling credentials, with their actions serving to further solidify hard rock's hold on the collective hearts and minds of the rock and roll masses. At the same time, veteran acts like Black Sabbath, Judas Priest, Megadeth and Slayer returned to the metal world, doing the musical voodoo that they do to the tune of best-selling albums and sold-out tours. Yes, from rising upstarts to gristled veterans, 2004 was the year when we all once again put the pedal to the metal!

"We're a proud of its roots and understand the history of this form" said the Darkness' charismatic vocalist Justin Hawkins. "For a while there, it just wasn't cool in some circles to even acknowledge that you *liked* hard rock, especially in parts of Europe. But today, everyone seems to understand that the music has evolved and that the power and focus is still there. The simple fact is that his kind of music has

always been with us, and it always will be. But this year was definitely a turning point in a lot of ways at least in the way that a lot of people perceive us and viewed loud, hard rock and roll."

The perception held by the world's populace of the 2004 metal empire was clearly one of a form in the midst of transition. Long gone were the "standard" metal trademarks of long hair, tight jeans and seemingly endless guitar solos. In their stead were shaven heads, coveralls and six-

string riffs heavy enough to sink a battleship. Yes, there's no question that as the 21st Century began to hit its mid-decade stride, the face, attitude and ambition of the hard rock world had taken a definite turn in a more intense and unpredictable direction. "Underground" bands such as Dimmu Borgir, Meshuggah, Cradle of Filth and Lamb of God made their stand, proving to one and all that metal had many differing faces to show a demanding public. But despite the inherent anger and intensity that fueled so many of the year's top hard rock releases, that attitude seemed to have little negative impact on the form's commercial success. In fact, more than 50 million metal-oriented albums were sold world-wide during 2004, an amazing figure in anyone's book.

Before anyone thinks that it was just metal's young lions who were leading this commercial charge, let it be said that metal's legendary forces also helped pave

the way for this year's historic impact on the rock scene. While the likes of Kiss continued on their seemingly never-ending touring cycle, forces like Black Sabbath continued to prove that they had what it took to amaze a new generation of head-banging fans—virtually all of whom weren't even born when that band first scored major acclaim three-and-a-half decades ago. As they headlined this year's Ozzfest (where they per-

formed along-side the likes of Slipknot, Slayer and Priest), it was clear that metal had effectively broken down the barriers that so often serve to separate one generation from another. In '04, great

METALLICA



"Things are changing so fast with the metal world right now."

BLACK SABBATH



METAL 2004

A SPECIAL REPORT!

metal music was recognized for its inherent quality—whether it was being played by the 20 year old girls in Kittie or the 55 year-old geezers in Sabbath.

"It's wonderful to be part of something like Ozzfest and be able to meet and hear so many exciting new bands," said Sabbath's Tony Iommi. "Perhaps that is what I enjoy the most. I love the kind of respect those bands show us— even though it never

unquestionably Slipknot, whose third album, **Vol. 3 (The Subliminal Verses)**, proved to be one of the year's landmark events. In style and substance this extreme nine man musical army boldly paved the way for the latest "theatrical" hard rock invasion, making it possible for acts like Motograter, Cradle of Filth and Mudvayne to instantly find a receptive audience. While some of the more conservative members of the rock world howled in protest over the often scathing view of humanity brought forth in many of the Knot's songs, this was clearly the unit most responsible for providing shape and substance to the year's metal world.

"For some reason people listen to the music we make and don't want to acknowledge that what we're doing is designed to make a lasting impres-



LAMB OF GOD

ceases to surprise me. But I also love the energy and commitment they bring to their music. Perhaps we've helped open the doors for some of them, but they've taken it from there. They've helped make metal the commercial force it once again has become."

Leading metal's latest commercial charge in 2004— as well as serving as the poster boys for metal's media resurgence— was



JET

THE DARKNESS



sion," said Slipknot's Clown. "I look at some of the great painters from previous centuries, and I see that the power of their work— as well as their influence on those who have come after them— has continued to grow over the years. That's the way I'd like to see our career go."

While some cynics still refuse to allow their imaginations to travel beyond the more blatant elements of Slipknot's approach, or to let the band's often bleak view of contemporary society invade their collective conscious-

TOP 5's OF 2004

In case you weren't paying particular attention (and shame on you if you weren't!) 2004 was a great year for heavy metal. Every time you turned around it seemed as if another hard rock band was releasing an exciting new album and then hitting the tour trail in support of that effort. That was the chart-topping formula followed by the likes of Slipknot, Velvet Revolver and Judas Priest! If that wasn't enough to satisfy your heavy-handed soul, tours such as *Ozzfest* brought the likes of Black Sabbath, Slayer and Lamb of God to the doorsteps of America, coast-to-coast. In addition, exciting new bands like the Darkness, Damageplan and Jet helped up the ante of hard rockin' appeal, in the process ensuring the metal form's glorious future. But we're not here to merely provide you with our unique insight into the year gone by— we're here to give you our views of the year's Top 5 stars in a wide variety of hard rock categories. You may agree with us, or you may not, but as we so happily say every year at this time, if you don't like *our* list, make up your own!

TOP 5 CDs

1. SLIPKNOT, VOL. 3 (THE SUBLIMINAL VERSES)
2. VELVET REVOLVER, CONTRABAND
3. DARKNESS, PERMISSION TO LAND
4. GODSMACK, THE OTHER SIDE
5. LAMB OF GOD, ASHES OF THE WAKE



TOP 5 BANDS

1. METALLICA
2. SLIPKNOT
3. BLACK SABBATH
4. KORN
5. LINKIN PARK

TOP 5 LIVE ACTS

1. METALLICA
2. SLAYER
3. SEVENDUST
4. KISS
5. DAMAGEPLAN

TOP 5 NEW ACTS

1. VELVET REVOLVER
2. THE DARKNESS
3. DAMAGEPLAN
4. SILVERTIDE
5. ALTER BRIDGE

TOP 5 PERSONALITIES

1. OZZY OSBOURNE
2. ROB HALFORD
3. SLASH
4. COREY TAYLOR
5. JUSTIN HAWKINS

THE YEAR IN METAL 2004



SLIPKNOT

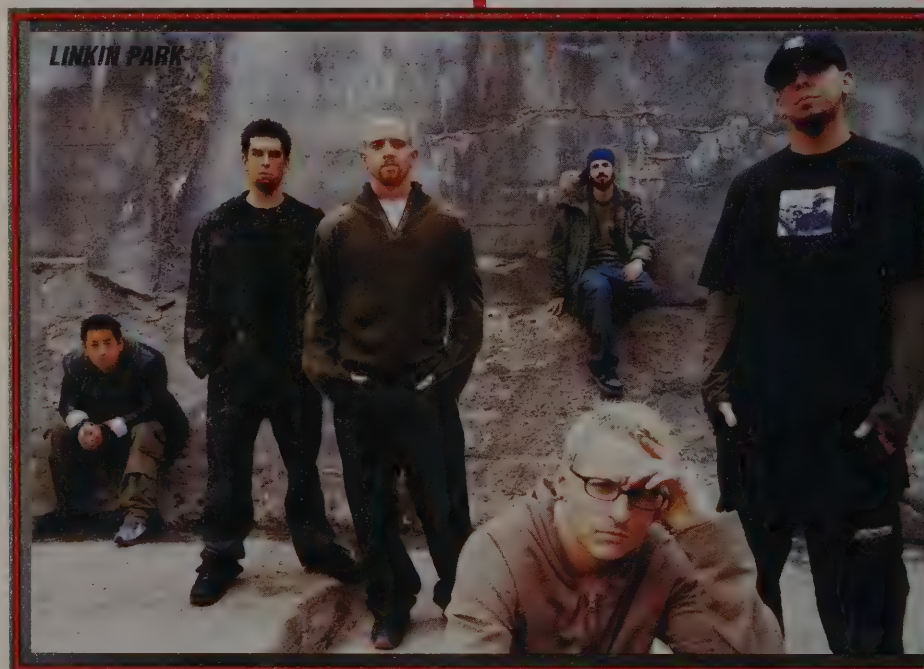
ness, there's no doubt that this midwestern band's influence has once again begun to deeply permeate into the very fiber of the contemporary music world. Unquestionably, Slipknot were far from alone in their quest to win over countless converts to the 21st Century heavy metal cause. From near and

"This may be one of the most interesting times in history for hard rock and heavy metal."

far they came; the Datsuns from New Zealand, the Darkness from England, Jet from Australia, Saliva from Tennessee, Linkin Park from California, Staind from Massachusetts and Silver Tide from Pennsylvania. Even acts from Asia and South America contributed something to the divergent 2004 metal scene. Indeed, the latest metal invasion has taken on world-wide proportions.

"This may be one of the most interesting times in history for hard rock and heavy metal," said an noted East Coast media contact. "If you look at the form historically, in the beginning almost all the great metal bands were British. Then in the '80s, you had a good mix of American and international bands. Now, different types of metal are played in different parts of the world. But there's no doubt that America is the leader in metal's latest evolutionary charge. In fact, that charge has been both evolutionary and revolutionary."

Revolutionary, indeed! Who could possibly have imagined back in the mousse-abusing '80s, the grunge-filled '90s or even the alterna-rocking early part of this decade, the size and shape of this latest metal invasion. Not only are the bands international in scope, and incredibly varied in appearance, background and influences, but many of them have effectively managed to reinvent the rock and roll "wheel"—a task that few



LINKIN PARK

TOP 5 VIDEOS

1. VELVET REVOLVER: SLITHER
2. THE DARKNESS: I BELIEVE IN A THING CALLED LOVE
3. SLIPKNOT: VERMILION
4. LINKIN PARK: BREAKING THE HABIT
5. ALTER BRIDGE: OPEN YOUR EYES

TOP 5 MOST OVERHYPED

1. VELVET REVOLVER
2. DARKNESS
3. ALTER BRIDGE
4. LAMB OF GOD
5. SILVERTIDE

TOP 5 "UNDERGROUND" BANDS

1. DIMMU BORGIR
2. LAMB OF GOD
3. CRADLE OF FILTH
4. ATREYU
5. ICED EARTH

TOP 5 LOUDEST BANDS

1. SLAYER
2. DIMMU BORGIR
3. JUDAS PRIEST
4. KISS
5. BLACK SABBATH



SLAYER

TOP 5 STRANGEST BANDS

1. SLIPKNOT
2. CRADLE OF FILTH
3. MESHUGGAH
4. A PERFECT CIRCLE
5. MUDVAYNE

TOP 5 ANNOYING PERFORMERS

1. BRITNEY SPEARS
2. EMINEM
3. HILLARY DUFF
4. USHER
5. JIMMY BUFFETT

TOP 5 TATTOOED ROCKERS

1. OZZY OSBOURNE
2. JUSTIN HAWKINS (DARKNESS)
3. CHESTER BENNINGTON (LINKIN PARK)
4. ROB HALFORD (JUDAS PRIEST)
5. PHILIP ANSELMO (DOWN)

VELVET REVOLVER



industry observers thought could ever be done. From the impassioned cries of the Knot to the rugged riffs of the G'N R/STP-offshoot band Velvet Revolver, to the exciting stylings presented by the post-Creed unit Alter Bridge, this year's hard rock form was a veritable bastion of both contrast and bombast.

In addition, with the influx of urban, rural and traditional influences into the heavy metal spectrum, a dizzying array of new stylistic variations have emerged. From the strident sounds of Korn—who scored with

Piper's clarion call.

"You can build on what you may have grown up listening to, but you'd better be ready to take it from there and put your own mark on things," said Linkin Park's Mike Shinoda. "Nobody wants to hear the same old stuff. I try to push it to the limit while still giving everyone a chance to hold on to something that they might feel somewhat comfortable with. That mix is the trick."

Whatever the "trick" may be, there's no way of denying the major impact that the heavy metal form has had on the contemporary music world in 2004. Everywhere you look and everywhere you go, the sounds and styles of today's top hard rock attractions are there to meet you eye-to-eye. Whether it's the horrific lyrical and physical images put forth by Slipknot, or the hauntingly beautiful words escaping from the chart-topping songs of Velvet Revolver, today's hard rock music is more varied, vibrant and vital than

ever before. It makes us all anxious for 2005 to begin just so we can discover what's gonna happen next!

"For so long metal was a very predictable form," said an East Coast radio personality. "Now it's not. You get a new metal album, and you really have no idea in what direction that band may go. That's amazing. That's wonderful. That's heavy metal in 2004."

their "greatest hits" disc—to the incredibly successful rap/metal sounds of Linkin Park (who piloted their own '04 *Projekt Revolution* tour package), the 21st Century the hard rock playing field has become something of a living, breathing laboratory where musical experimentation is key, and unpredictable results are the norm. Best yet, fans everywhere seem to be responding to these varied sounds like it is the true Pied

SALIVA



TOP 5 FEMALE ROCKERS

1. AMY LEE, EVANESCENCE
2. NADYA, COAL CHAMBER
3. BRETT ANDERSON, DONNAS
4. MORGAN LANDER, KITTIE
5. OPETH SHAMAYA, OPETH



KITTIE

TOP 5 MOVIE SOUNDTRACKS

1. SOME KIND OF MONSTER
2. SPIDER MAN 2
3. THE PUNISHER
4. FREDDY VS JASON
5. RESIDENT EVIL

TOP 5 "BALD" ROCKERS

1. DAVID DRAIMAN (DISTURBED)
2. AARON LEWIS (STAINED)
3. SCOOTER WARD (COLD)
4. JEFF HANNEMAN (SLAYER)
5. ROB HALFORD (JUDAS PRIEST)

TOP 5 CD TITLES

1. SALIVA, SURVIVAL OF THE SICKEST
2. THE DATSUNS, OUTTA SIGHT/OUTTA MIND
3. CHEVELLE, THIS TYPE OF THINKING COULD DO US IN
4. DROWNING POOL, DESENSITIZED
5. MEGADETH, THE SYTEM HAS FAILED

TOP 5 MISSING IN ACTION

1. SYSTEM OF A DOWN
2. DEFTONES
3. GUNS 'N ROSES
4. IRON MAIDEN
5. LED ZEPPELIN

TOP 5 CARTOONS

1. SOUTHPARK
2. JUSTICE LEAGUE
3. TEEN TITANS
4. GUNDAM SEED
5. DRAGONBALL GT

TOP 5 (FALSE) RUMORS

1. PANTERA REUNION
2. KISS FINALLY RETIRING
3. SABBATH STUDIO ALBUM
4. SLIPKNOT BREAKING UP
5. NEW VAN HALEN ALBUM



HIT PARADER

THE TOP 5'S OF
FIND OUT THE TOP: BAND, CDS, TOURS, FEMALE RO

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METALLICA



KORN

LINKIN





THE TOP 5's OF 2004!

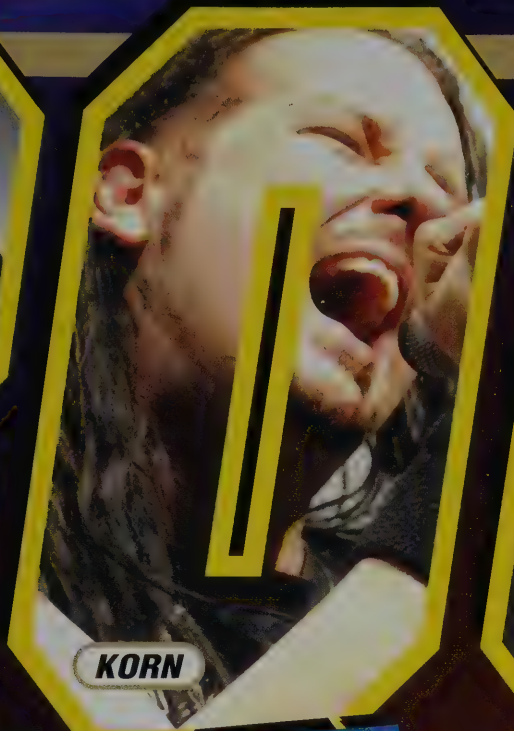
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METALLICA



KORN



LINKIN PARK



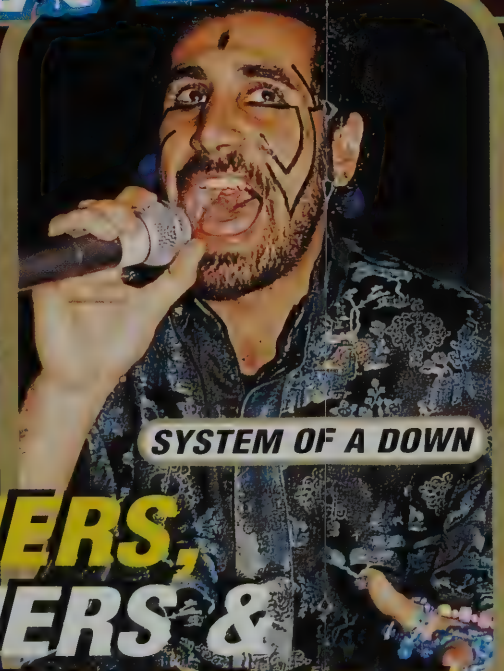
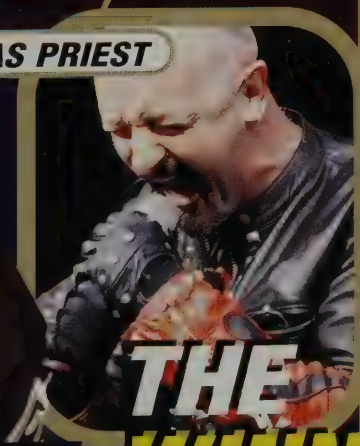
VELVET REVOLVER

SLIPKNOT
BAND OF THE YEAR!

THE YEAR IN MUSIC



JUDAS PRIEST



SYSTEM OF A DOWN



SABBATH



LAMB OF GOD

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THE
WINNERS,
WHINERS &
LOSERS OF '04!

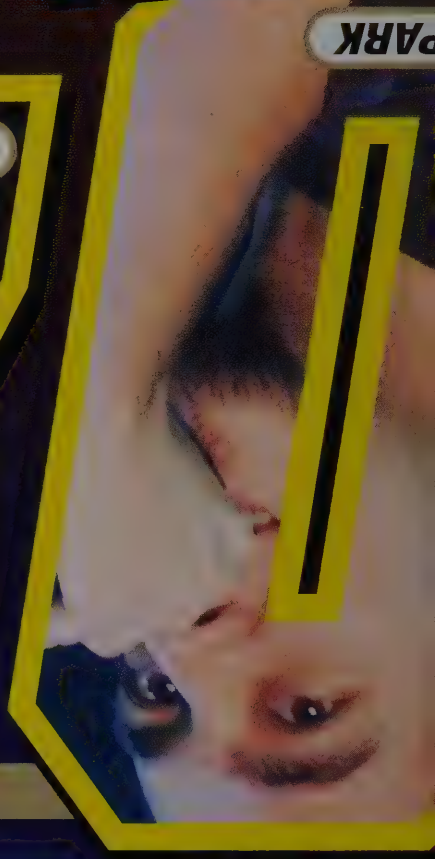
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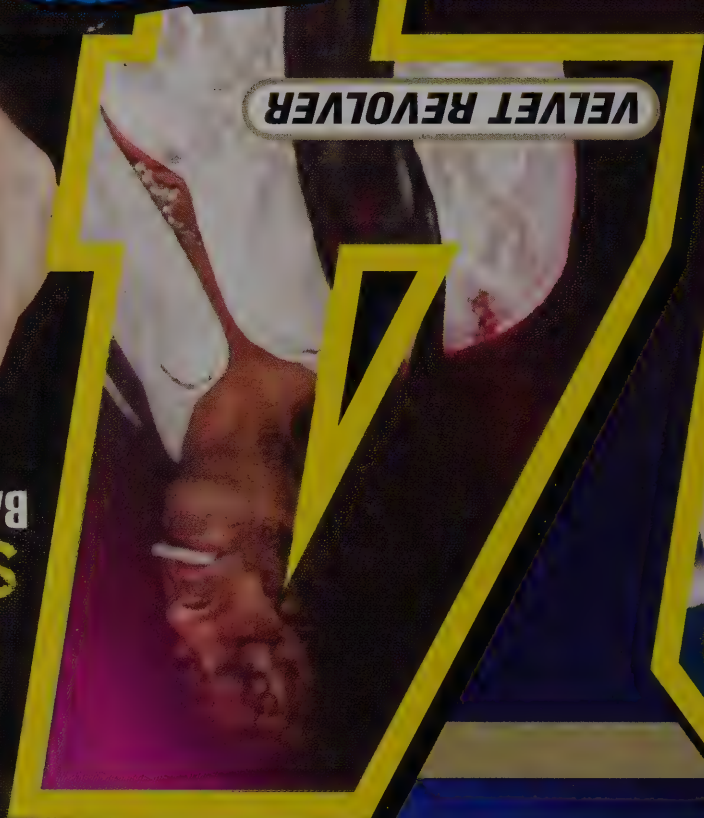
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PRESTIGES



PARK

VELVET REVOLVER



SLIPKNOT
BAND OF THE YEAR!



HP

JUDAS PRIEST



BLACK SABBATH

"I would love to see Sabbath just keep going and going."

WHAT NEXT?

BY ROB ANDREWS

It was late afternoon, and Tony Iommi was sitting in a quiet corner of a bustling New York City coffee shop, almost daintily downing a cup of tea. As the mass of humanity hustled obliviously past Black Sabbath's legendary guitarist, the nattily attired Iommi's calm, cool demeanor seemed to exude a cultured elegance that contrasted sharply with the blue-collar Big Apple ethic. He sat, almost unmoving, watching as the rush hour mobs swirled past him, resembling nothing as much as a colony of crazed lemmings headed blindly for the sea. Occasionally a small smile would cross his mustachioed upper lip as a particularly bizarre action caught his fancy, and once every minute or so he would again raise his steaming brew and take a measured sip.

The scene was not what you might imagine when mental pictures of Black Sabbath race through your brain. After all, for the last 35 years Iommi has been the focal point (and only constant) in creating the unmatched Black Sabbath legacy, during which time these quintessential British bashers have been dubbed everything from "The Princes Of Darkness" and "Satan's Favorite Band" to "The Godfathers Of Metal". For his part, Iommi neither accepts nor rejects *any* of these classifications—it's all part of his mystique. He's never admitted that he was a Satanist...nor has he denied it. He's never openly expressed admiration for a new generation of Sabbath-inspired metal merchants...nor has he castigated them. Tony Iommi, much like Black Sabbath itself, remains cloaked firmly in a thick shroud of mystery.

"I never believed in telling everything that everyone wanted to know," he said.

Perhaps it's my traditional English upbringing; we're not quite as verbose as some Americans. I've learned that occasionally what you *don't* reveal becomes far more interesting than what you do, so my reticence to discuss certain details of my life or the band's music has always worked in our favor. It's helped make Black Sabbath just a little more interesting.

Certainly "interesting" seems to be almost too trite a word to use in regard to Black Sabbath. From their early days back in the '70s, when such albums as *Paranoid*, *Master Of Reality* and *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath* helped forge the metal empire, to the release of their *Black Box* set and band's latest reformation as part of the 2004 *Ozzfest* (where Iommi has once again teamed with vocalist Ozzy Osbourne, bassist Geezer Butler and drummer Bill Ward), Iommi alone has helped Sabbath survive both good times and bad while always remaining the *ultimate* heavy metal band.

Sabbath's brand of plodding, grinding, heavier-than-thou hard rock has been both in fashion, and out of fashion countless times during the last three-and-a-half decades. Yet no matter what the band's "hipness" status has been, they've never failed to deliver the monster-riff goods whenever the occasion to do so has been presented. Today, while Iommi is not totally satisfied with the band's unsure future (which is now controlled to a great extent by Ozzy and his wife Sharon), he's become well aware that just keeping Sabbath alive—by any means necessary—is the most important issue on his musical agenda.

"There have been some interesting times

for us in recent years," he said. "I would prefer to know that there will be more opportunities to play Sabbath music. But I've learned to accept things for what they are. I may voice a complaint every now and then, but my top priority is to make sure that Sabbath lives on."

As the rock world anxiously watches and waits to see what the next move in the always-unpredictable Sabbath chess game might be, some undeniable facts remain. Certainly, there are bands today who play even meaner, leaner, nastier metal than Sabbath, but none can ever hope to match the breadth and scope of the metal mashings that have been this band's calling card for 35 amazing years. The all-encompassing aura of Sabbath, especially the one-and-only *original* Sabbath, remains as strong today as it was when the eight classic Ozzy-era discs (recorded 1970-1979) that comprise *Black Box* first helped establish the band's stellar credentials so many years ago. Somewhat ironically, when asked about today's generation of metallers, many of whom cite Sabbath as a major influence, Iommi sounds less than intrigued.

"Some I like, some I'm not particularly fond of—but most I haven't even heard," he said. "I guess you're always honored when another musician says you've been an influence on them, but I think the original is always more interesting than those who follow. I'm certainly not saying that there aren't newer bands around who are playing very interesting music. But there was always much more to Sabbath than just playing loud or playing fast. Some of the young bands don't seem to realize that. For too many of them, volume is a be-all, end-all and that just can't be."


Putting all such talk of other bands in a proper perspective, however, is the fact that on stage—following *Ozzfest* performances by a host of other metal acts—Black Sabbath remains as awe-inspiring as ever. Despite Ozzy's increasing frailty (he's still not fully recovered from the life-threatening ATV accident he suffered last year), and the band's growing age, Sabbath can still play with more skill and more volume than just about any band around! Each and every night at *Ozzfest*, Osbourne, Iommi, Ward and Butler have stood shoulder to shoulder, wearing their fringed leather jackets, their giant crosses glistening in the spotlight, laying down some of the most awesome riffs ever heard by the ears of mortal man. They've played *Paranoid*, *Iron Man* and *Sweet Leaf*, songs upon which the entire heavy metal empire has been constructed. And most importantly, they've seemed happy. It was almost as if the band and their audience had together been transported back in time to 1975—and Black Sabbath once again ruled the rock world.

"I've been asked so many times already, 'what's next?'" Iommi said. "Everyone wants to know if we're going to keep touring, or do any recording together. To be honest, I don't know. This has gone along better than any of us could have imagined. It's been just as exciting for us as it has been for the fans."



TONY IOMMI

HP



Aaron Lewis:
"We're trying to
mix our lighter and
heavier sides."

STAIND

MASTERS OF THEIR DOMAIN

BY LEE TILLINGHAST

At some indeterminate moment during the last few years, most likely while none of us was paying particular attention, Staind emerged as one of the true veteran forces of the contemporary hard rock scene. For those whose memory banks go back to the not-so-distant time when this New England-based band made their initial entry into the upper echelon of rock society—with their breakout 1999 disc **Dysfunction**—it seems to have been a fast ride to the top for vocalist Aaron Lewis, guitarist Mike Mushok, bassist Johnny April and drummer Jon Wysocki. But as these rockers now look around them they see many of their "new metal" compatriots in various states of disarray and disrepair, leaving scant few acts from their era still making a significant mark on the rock and roll world.

But such notions do little to distract this emotive unit from their immediate tasks-at-hand. As they work with all due-diligence to complete work on their latest studio offering (with producer David Bottrill), they know that the combined 10 million copies they've sold of **Tormented**, **Dysfunction**, **Break the Cycle** and **14 Shades of Grey** have made them an important and influential fixture upon the contemporary music landscape. And the

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

members of Staind also know that in the upcoming months, as the rock universe continues to evolve at a dizzying pace, some of the greatest challenges of their lives await them.

"It's easy to say that you don't notice how things change," Mushok said. "But I don't know if you could do that honestly. We're all aware of what's going on in music, and while we do try to limit the impact any of that may have upon us, it invariably does to some extent."

So where might Staind's new music go on their still-untitled fifth album? It's a question that Mushock and his bandmates will excitedly speculate about—while refusing to reveal too many "intimate" details. From what we can ascertain, the band began writing independently for the new disc back in March, and then gathered together in May to begin recording in earnest. By August the band had moved to their Springfield-based rehearsal space in which they proceeded to record final guitar and vocal parts.

"Things went amazingly well for us in the studio," the guitarist said. "Working with David (Bottrill) has been very exciting for us because he's a stickler for detail, and he's determined to get the best performance out of you—no matter how long it takes. We had some great material ready when we began—including a number of Aaron's acoustic ideas—and we continued writing once we began recording. It all seemed to come together for us."

So now it should only be a few short months before we all get the chance to hear what the Staind guys have been feverishly working on in their new studio surroundings. But it's our bet that this new material will probably only add additional luster to Staind's already-gleaming hard rock resume. After all, this isn't a band out to change the world or reinvent the rock and roll wheel. Staind is content with just being... well, Staind!

Over the years this quartet has learned that perception is everything in rock and roll. The manner in which an artist is viewed by both fans and the media can directly—and permanently—impact that performer's on-going rate of success or failure. For Staind, the manner in which the rock world has perceived them in recent years has been both wonderful and troubling. The reason for that is these guys have always looked at themselves as a hard rock band—one that relied on guitar-driven power and from-the-gut vocal forays to convey the essence of their strident musical message. But to many more recent fans, Staind is a band known more for such acoustic tunes as *Outside* and *It's Been Awhile*, and as they wrap up work on their latest collection, this unit has rightfully begun to wonder if their perception within the metal world has significantly changed.

"We did have two very high-profile songs that showed a different side to us," Lewis said. "We had established our reputation as a hard rock band so we saw no problem with showcasing something a little different. But what we didn't fully realize was that those two songs were going to serve as the initial introduction to this band for a lot of people. We really expanded our audience over the last few years. We wanted those people to hear what the essence of Staind really was—and that's something we focused on when we went back into the studio."

Indeed, many of those Johnny-come-lately fans may well be in for the musical shock of their lives if they buy Staind's new album, or attend one of the band's concerts, expecting to be serenaded with an evening's worth of "pleasant" acoustic tunes. Sure, the diversity and dexterity this fearsome foursome bring to their shows is one of Staind's most compelling trademarks. But it's unquestionably their heavy, driving beats—such as those shown in such hits as *Suffocate* and *I Can't Believe*—that have made this moody crew one of the true jewels in the crown of New Metal society. Their acoustic interludes may have drawn a fresh legion of fans towards Staind's impassioned sound, but when those musical travelers arrive at their final destination, they're liable to be totally blown away by the sheer power this band brings to each and every performance they give.

"I tend to write acoustically," Lewis said. "It's easier and more intimate. But most of the songs that start

"We don't let what's happening in music impact us that much."



Mike Mushok:
"Each album represents the chance for us to try something new."

off in that manner are quickly transformed once the entire band gets hold of them. That's been true on the new album as well. It certainly doesn't bother me—it's expected. But there will always be that acoustic side to what we do."

The two sides of the band's musical presentation have certainly drawn an incredible response from all corners of the rock universe. Magazine covers, MTV specials and headlining tours have all become key parts of the Staind equation, with even those not usually attuned to the larger-than-life perspectives offered by the hard rock scene embracing this band like long-lost kin.

"There's been such an amazing change in the way people have responded to us," Mushok explained. "Their expectations are very high, and we want them to know that ours are, as well."

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

SLAYER

FIRE DOWN BELOW

BY PETE MORGAN

Just mention the name "Slayer" to the group's horde of rabid followers and you're virtually guaranteed to be greeted by a throng of slack-jawed, drooling, head-banging drones just salivating for their next taste of this legendary foursome's blood-thirsty sound. Mind you, it's not that the majority of Slayer's fan base necessarily starts out that way; in fact many of them border on the *almost* normal most of the time. But just one whiff of killer riff, just one taste of toxic metal waste is enough to transform each and every one of them into metal maniacs that can only be controlled by a long, intense Slayer session.

If truth be known, the members of Slayer—vocalist/bassist Tom Araya, guitarists Jeff Hanneman and Kerry King and drummer Dave Lombardo—find this incredible dedication to the Slayer cause somewhat amusing. While they're intensely proud of the near-fanatical loyalty their music generates, the almost mystical magic that these L.A. thrash masters cast upon their followers is lost upon the very men who create it. They can comprehend the allure of their power-packed riffs, and they understand the draw of

always somebody out there who wants to try to knock you off of your pinnacle. Quite simply, they want to make their rep by taking you out. It's kind'a like being the heavyweight champion of the boxing world; there's a big, drunk guy in every bar in every town who thinks he can take you down with just one punch. The heavy odds are, however, that if he ever got the chance to stare down the

album, *Show No Mercy*, in 1984, Slayer has been called every dirty name in the book. They've been labeled as "no talents", as "avowed Satanists", as "sick muthas" and as "bad influences" by everyone from the mainstream rock press to government-sponsored conservative action groups. Indeed, the latter of whom actually tried to do away with the band

"Believe me, not only don't we listen to what else is going on, we don't care!"

champ face to face, he'd end up flat on his ass with his nose located somewhere south of heaven.

There's nobody that can doubt the notion that Slayer remain the heavyweight champions of the rock world. Despite having been absent from the music scene for disappointingly large segments of the last half decade, these seminal Left Coast power rockers are still without peer when it comes to laying down the heaviest riffs, the most hell-bent lyrics and the most blood-curdling vocals on the planet. Metallica? C'mon, let's admit it, they sometimes seem like they're on the verge of evolving into pseudo-pop wimps. Slipknot? Please! The nine man mutant army's latest efforts seem tame even in com-

during one of their memorable late '80s purges. That kind of approach may have worked on Twisted Sister, baby, but not on Slayer! The Crunch Bunch took the best shots those Capitol Hill weasels had to offer and then laughed in their faces. They emerged from the fray hotter, nastier and bigger than ever.

"It was all kind of amusing to us," Araya said. "Did they think the kids who listened to us were going to listen to someone like them tell them to stop? Those groups didn't seem to realize that they were actually doing us a favor. They really helped us, whether they want to admit it or not."

From the sonic fury of 1985's *Hell Awaits*, to their outrageously intense 1986 release *Reign In Blood*, to 1988's groundbreaking *South Of Heaven* to 1990's historic *Seasons In The Abyss*, Slayer took on all comers and knocked 'em out with one punch. Conservative groups? Bam! The rock press? Boom! Hard rock pretenders? Pow! And then at their moment of total conquest, when seemingly no wars remained to be fought, no battles left to be won, a haunting silence gripped the world. To many it seemed as if Slayer has gone underground at the very peak of their powers. Their loyal fans waited...and waited...and waited. And, in all honesty, over the last 15 years the band's efforts have been far more sporadic—and perhaps far less memorable. But with their triumphant return at *Ozzfest*—where they shared the main stage with metal legends Black Sabbath and Judas Priest—it seems like all is once again right in the Slayer universe.

All hail the kings! All hail the champions! They're returned, and are ready to be worshipped by their loyal minions. If you don't, Slayer's just liable to come right to your front door and knock you on your ass.

"Our fans are the best... without question!"

their gut-wrenching subject matter, but as the band winds up their incredibly well-received stint at this year's *Ozzfest*, they're also trying to prepare for ever-more-intense rounds of fanatical fan antics.

"Our fans are the best," Araya said. "Though I think a few of them do take it a little too far. They'll see me walking down the street and they'll come running up with blood in their eyes shouting 'Slayer, SLAYER, SLAYER!' It's great, but if you're not used to it, you start to wonder what kind of power you have over these people. If we didn't have a real good understanding of ourselves, and a healthy perspective on what we're doing, that kind of power could really be dangerous."

The fact of the matter is that often times, it's not easy being Slayer. Just think about it; when you're the baddest of the bad, the heaviest of the heavy, the meanest of the mean, you're always the target...the highest rung on the ladder...the guys sittin' on top of the mountain. And because of that there's

parison to their own earlier masterpieces. The horde of mindless European Death Metal merchants? Oh my! Slayer exude more skill in their midnight spittle spray than all those bands do when combined on their best day. Just one listen to any of the Slaymasters riff-riddled opus, tells you that despite the number of poseurs that may want to challenge Slayer for their metallic throne, the once and future kings are still totally in charge.

"We haven't been staying in the same place musically," Araya said. "This tour has seen us go a few places places we've never been before, but it does so with the unmistakable Slayer edge. Sometimes it seems to me as if almost every band listens to what is hot at the moment in rock and roll and then makes their music accordingly. Believe me, not only don't we listen to what else is going on, we don't care!"

Certainly Slayer have good reason not to care what else is going on in the rock world. After all, it is that same rock scene that has chosen to occasionally turn their backs on the Lords Of Loud during their two decades of decadence. Since the release of their debut



TOM ARAYA

HP

SILVERTIDE

Silvertide's Walt Lafty admits that touring with Van Halen throughout the first months of that unit's "reunion" tour was one of the highlights of his professional life. But when you begin to consider that Silvertide's debut disc, *Show & Tell*, wasn't even released when that early-summer road jaunt took place, it's not hard to understand that tour's high ranking on Lafty's "all time" list. Indeed, for a band that has yet to make their first real mark on the hard rock world, it seems as if people have been talking about Silvertide for a long, long time. The fact is that this Philadelphia-based unit has been a big-time player on the music scene ever since they first inked their major label deal two years ago. But despite delays and deviations from their initial schedule, it seems that everything is finally back-on tracks for Lafty and his bandmates, lead guitarist Nick Perri, bassist Brian Weaver, guitarist Mark Melchiorre and drummer Kevin Frank.

"It's a strange feeling to have your work in the studio finished, yet have very few people know your music," the singer said. "There's that period between when you complete recording and the album comes out that's hard to explain. We went on the road—most of the time with Van Halen—during that period and while it would have been great to have the album out by then so more people could have known who we are and what we do, I think everything turned out really well."

Lafty isn't one to leave much to chance. On the nights when the perpetually late-arriving Van Halen crowd wasn't responding with enough gusto to Silvertide's tight, loud 30 minute set, the lanky frontman would hop down from his perch atop the arena stage and take his place amid the audience. From that precarious spot he would jump atop a handy chair and begin extolling fans to join in as the band rolled through their trademark hit, *Ain't Going Home*. Slowly but surely, the more sedate (and definitely more mature) members of the VH crowd began to get with the program, and by set's end, Lafty and his musical mates invariably had the packed house eating out of the palm of their hand.

"It was a challenge every night," he said. "Van Halen's audience was great to us, but some of them are a little older than a lot of the fans we've played for before, and I wanted to make sure that we got a maximum response out of them. So I'd jump down into the crowd and do whatever was necessary for them to get into it. A little audience participation is a fun thing when it's done right, and I tried to put my own twist on it."

Putting their own twist on things has certainly seemed to work for this Philly fivesome over the last few months. With *Show & Tell* finally making its mark, and the band continuing on what has been virtually a non-stop tour trail, it seems as if this young hard rock unit is prepared to do whatever is necessary to make sure that their distinctive brand of "classic rock" reaches just the right audience. Already forces at rock radio have turned such band tunes as *Devil's Daughter* into rotation staples, while the group's never ending road work has managed to win over new converts on a nightly basis. It's all been pretty heady stuff for this ever-confident unit.

"We believe in ourselves," Perri said. "That may sound kind of obvi-

ous, but it's one of the things that has separated us from a lot of the young bands we've met over the last few years. We know that nothing will stand in our way—and that we'll do whatever is necessary to make sure we get where we want."

No matter how confident the Silvertide boys may be about their riff-rock attack, the fact of the matter is that it's now put-up or shut-up time for this fun-loving, '70s-styled rock and roll unit. The appearance of the Tide's debut full-length disc issues the definitive statement for this promising young band to move to the forefront of the current retro-rock revival being spurred by the likes of Jet and the Darkness.

"If there's supposed to be a lot of pressure, we're not feeling it," Lafty said. "Maybe that's because we're all just not aware that we're supposed to feel that way. Or maybe it's because we've been doing this together for a long time and we've developed a lot of confidence in ourselves and in what we can do."

Whether or not Silvertide's too-cool-for-words reaction to their current rock and roll fate is truly a by-product of their totally-in-control musical stance, the results are now becoming quite evident. There's no question about it, Silvertide have what it takes to make a major mark on the '04/'05 rock world. With *Show & Tell* delivering the

"Opening for Van Halen was a challenge that we loved."

power-packed goods with both fashion and flair, obvious comparisons to the young Stones and Aerosmith are almost inevitable. The fact that Tide's disc was mixed by Kevin Shirley—who made his mark working on classic '80s Aerosmith albums—only serves to heighten such comparisons. But while Silvertide don't exactly cringe when such links are made, neither do they try to strengthen those apparent musical bonds.

"There's no way we would deny that we love great rock and roll and that we've absorbed as much of it as possible over the years," Lafty said. "We love stuff like Zeppelin and the Stones, but who doesn't? We're not elitist in that way at all. But on the other hand we don't want people thinking that all we're doing is trying to bring back a sound that started being popular 30 years ago... long before we were even born! A lot of what we've done on this album has come to us naturally... believe it or not."

Whether you choose to take Lafty's words at face value, the simple fact of the matter is that these guys can rock... and rock with the best of 'em. Indeed, judging by media response generated by their recent opening act tour, it seemed that on most nights the Tide more than held their own with their more illustrious road partners. Not bad for a bunch of hard-working kids whose rock and roll career now stretches out before them.

"We've been lucky in that almost everything people have said about us has been good," Lafty said. "But we try not to get too caught up in any of that. We learned right from the start that you can't let what people say about you have any impact on your commitment."

LIVING IT UP

BY RANDY SMITH



SILVERTIDE



BY: AMY SCIARRETTO

NEUROSIS

Deafening thud. Compressed, dense musical journeys, as opposed to "songs." That's Neurosis in a nutshell. The band is known for generating psychedelic symphonies, as opposed to albums. Neurosis hails from the Bay Area, a geographical region known for its assembly-line production of thrash speed metal. But Neurosis is the antithesis, playing snail's pace hard rock that can effectively alter your state of consciousness. Neurosis is an experience.

On its new album, **The Eye Of Every Storm**, every note, every chord, every riff, every sound is carefully thought out and perfectly placed. To call the album artistically inclined would be an understatement, and with each successive album, Neurosis continues to stray further and further from the realm of (relatively) easy listening.

"It's not a cerebral process for us. It's not a mental decision where we discuss how we are going to change. It's organic and natural," says singer Steve Von Till. "With more experience, more wisdom and more time doing this, it becomes more and more effortless. We have learned to succumb to that driving force, surrender ourselves to the spirit of what we're doing, that place that can only be expressed by sound because words fail us. Our music is not experimental in the sense that we don't improvise and we have set arrangements." Von Till continues, "We are a rock band. We use guitar, bass, drums, keyboards, but our music tends to become unorthodox because we live in our own world after twenty years of playing with each other

and crafting our own thing. We get closer to the point of origin, closer to the fire, and farther away from what people can define."

That's quite the paradox, as most bands move further from their originally intended goal as they continue to play together. Von Till responds, "Some people find comfort in stasis, and we embrace evolution and change."

While most people have trouble staying together after one year, be it band, couple, or friends, Neurosis are still "in love" after twenty years as a unit. "We're willing to dedicate ourselves to the music, whereas others only pay it lip service and get caught up in ego, and in the music business. The music business is a total money pit. Business and art rarely mix honorably. For us, it's not about being a part of the business. We dedicate ourselves to the music. Personal commitments are not to an ego. We're lucky to have found each other, stumbled into the sound. We get to translate this into sound, culturally important. Bands break up for stupid reasons. Put aside insignificant personal garbage. We deal with bigger questions of life, contemplating the evolution, the purpose of humanity, what it is like to be a thinking, feeling, emotional self-reflecting being."

See what we mean by "deep?" There is nothing simple about

NEUROSIS FAST FACTS:

- Neurosis collaborated with Jarboe of the legendary band Swans on an album. The band had never collaborated with anyone prior to its work with Jarboe.
- Alchemy Records, Lookout Records, Alternative Tentacles, and Relapse Records were all label homes to Neurosis.
- When listening to **The Eye Of Every Storm**, Von Till offers this advice: "Pay attention to the subtleties. That is where our pride lies in this. We learned to be powerful in volume, in other media, extra sensory, through silence and explosion. We were on a 'less is more' track, and on this record, we found subtlety. It's not a quiet record. It's the area in between. Every sound has its own space and purpose. It's simple where it sounds complex."





OCEANSIZE FAST FACTS

Neurosis. Not their music, not their trains of thought. **The Eye Of Every Storm** is another solid brick-in-Neurosis' wall of noise. "Every time we have a new record, I say it's absolutely the most evolved we've ever been. It's our best effort yet. It's our most challenging and rewarding record. It is the eye of the storm. It is what it says it is. It's getting closer to the center from where it all emanates."

OCEANSIZE

British rock band Oceansize personifies guitar rock. The band employs three (!) guitarists to craft the beautiful noise on **Effloresce**. But Oceansize does not purport to be the next Lynyrd Skynyrd, nor does it specialize in the kind of truck driver-friendly guitar rock that you hear ad nauseum on every rock radio station known to mankind. Nah, Oceansize, who hail from Manchester, the scene of a hip rock scene in the '80s, is much more complex than that. Oceansize culls influence from quirky, guitar-driven rock bands like Jane's Addiction, Helmet, and Tool, along with the spacey, almost prog soundscapes of rockers like Faith No More and Cave In. There's even a little Radiohead influence on **Effloresce**, which kicks off with a dreamy instrumental (*I Am The Morning*) before kicking into the knuckle-down, staccato riffing of *Catalyst*. The pulsating tunes are capped off by singer/guitarist Mike Vennart's creamy crooning.

Effloresce is characterized by textures and layers. Even if you listen to it a dozen times, you still uncover different nuggets of sound, hidden, creative twists of sound that you didn't hear last

- Mike used to read *HIT PARADER* when he was a kid. "I had relatives in Canada and they would send me magazines. I liked seeing Brett Michaels on the cover."
- Mike has been playing guitar for a long time, and grew up on Ozzy Osbourne and Iron Maiden. He also loved David Lee Roth.
- When Oceansize toured the States, U.S. audiences seemed baffled by his thick British accent. He felt like he needed closed captioning or something to translate. Even though he was speaking English!

time, no matter how finely you tuned your ear. It's packed wall-to-wall with distorted guitar jams. One might even go as far as to call them epics. They even have a little bit of Incubus style tucked in; only Oceansize is more complex. And the band takes all the accolades in stride, and doesn't let it go to its head.

"We're all Helmet and Jane's Addiction fans, and the Incubus comparison often comes up," says Vennart. "The singer probably worships the same three people I do, but I don't want to say who the three are. Okay, I'll tell you who they are. It's Vince Neil, Gene Simmons, and Ronnie James Dio! Just kidding. We don't want to be overblown and pompous. There is a fine line between glory and cheesy, and it's not something that we rely on. We have the triple guitar thing, yes. But we use it to make textures, and to make it three-dimensional, like a magic-eye picture for your ears, basically."

The album's ending is also drawing lots of attention. It's angular and sprawling, and very long. Each of the last three songs is strong enough to be the album's effective closer. "We ended up with three long songs at the end, and we're not sure how! Chris Sheldon, the producer, was good at incorporating the frills and the gloss. We like to provide variety in the song, like making a good salad. Salad can be boring, unappetizing proposition for a meal. Without wanting to make a song sound like Yes, you don't

want to overdo the Thousand Island dressing. You order a salad, and make it attractive, and take it from simple to fancy. You dress things up."

Despite the fancy, well-dressed, cerebral music, there are no lyrics in the CD booklet for **Effloresce**. There are no photos of the band, either. You'll have to hit www.sizeofanocean.com to see these blokes. As to why Oceansize kept it so simple in the artwork, Vennart says, "It's much better that people think they know what the words are. I never knew the words to my favorite record, and I liked that. I don't want to be too obvious. It ruins it. Let the music paint all the pictures. And we didn't want anyone to know what we look like til they came to see us. And we forgot to put our own names on our own record. There's no proof to our grandchildren that it is us."

We think Effloresce will stand the test of time, despite the members forgetting to credit themselves in the liner notes!

HEAD AUTOMATICA

Head Automatica is the brainchild of Glassjaw singer Daryl Palumbo. But while Glassjaw is emotional, hard-on-the-ears hardcore, stuffed with distortion and kinetic energy, Head Automatica is like a soundtrack to a dance party where your feet never get tired. It's hip. It's upbeat. Kinda like the Beastie Boys, only less rap and more disco.

Palumbo, a born 'n bred Long Islander, admits that **Decadence**, Head Automatica's debut, is similar to the Beasties in that it "co-opts black music," and borrows from a variety of urban cultural and musical sources. "I don't think I made a party record," Palumbo explains. We agree. Full of beats injected by Dan The Automator, the edgy, so-fun-it-hurts **Decadence** lifts influence from sources most of you probably aren't too familiar with.

"When this [band] was conceived, the dual purpose was to present listeners with a culture or a lifestyle and then with great music," the revved up Palumbo explains. "In the early and mid-90s, Moax Records was one of my top five favorite labels, and it changed everything. It opened me up to hip-hop, electronic music, and a fashion and culture. I see Head Automatica and our whole family doing the same thing."

That's a lofty goal, but it's also the primal root of music... to connect people and a scene.

"It's possible to do that. I want to give someone a feeling of a lifestyle that they want to be part of. A club they want to be a part of," Palumbo reasons. "You have to give them clothing, faces, and an attitude to relate to, in order to relate to the music. As sad and



HEAD AUTOMATICA FACTS:

- Palumbo says that *Please Please Please* is the only song with serious subject matter on the album. The rest is tongue-in-cheek, jokey oneliners.
- Palumbo is a diehard fan of Godzilla. Don't even try to quiz him on the subject. He'll win.
- Glassjaw is not broken up; Head Automatica is another band for Palumbo, not a side project. But it doesn't spell the end of Glassjaw.

strange as that sounds, it's true, but we're not aiming to be Williamsburg hipsters." Indeed, while it might seem clique-style to want to form a group, Head Automatica and this type of music is for the misfits, those who never "fit" in anyway.

PROJECT 86

Your mom (or dad) probably told you not to burn your bridges, in case you ever have to go back. For California band Project 86, burning bridges was essential in order for the band to move forward. The band's new album, *Songs To Burn Your Bridges By*, reflects that policy.

"It's a response to the last album, *Truthless Heroes*," says singer Andrew Schwab from the road. "We were in a tough spot at the time. And this is what came out. We were being pushed in a different direction on the last album. I don't think it was our best effort. I like the songs, but the emotional quality was compro-

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PHOTO: INDIE MALLUK



PROJECT 86 FAST FACTS:

- "Sometimes it's necessary to survive, move forward. I've burned bridges I've regretted. It's not a great policy in every situation, but we chose the title because it was necessary to get out of what we were in."
- At the Cornerstone Festival in Illinois last summer, Schwab left the microphone on the ground and let the crowd sing *Stein's Theme*, the closer, and they were louder than the band.
- *Safe Haven* is Schwab's favorite song on the new album.
- Schwab encourages fans to go www.project86.com, go to the forums and talk away!

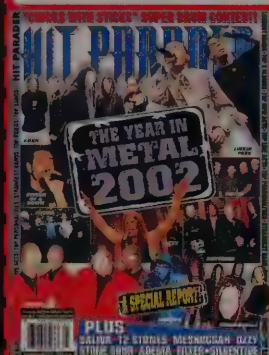
mised. It was over-thought and there were too many people involved. Everyone wants a say. We can't formulate a plan with our songs. The new album is more emotional and it's more Project 86. And it has to do with the **Truthless Heroes** experience, where we were cutting off those relationships which hindered our band and almost destroyed us."

P86 left Atlantic Records, its label home for two albums and were contemplating what to do next.

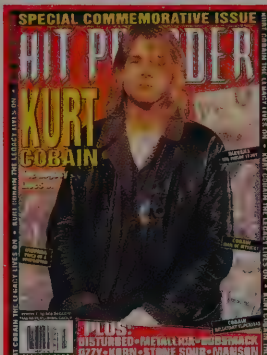
"We got together with Matt Hyde and he agreed to record us, and he talked us into doing a whole record. We recorded it in 6 days, and mixed it in 4. We put it online and sold it at shows over 4 months, and we shopped it," explains Schwab. "We ended up back at Tooth And Nail because they went out of their way to mend things with us, because we had a falling out when we left the label. They are doing a good job selling records, which the majors aren't doing a great job at. Atlantic didn't know what to do with our band."

Despite no longer having the financial backing of a major label, Project 86 continues to tour like it's going out of style. "It always works out for us," Schwab states. "We're not a hardcore band, and kids go out to hardcore shows. We don't really fit in that scene, or in the mainstream rock scene, either. Our fanbase supports us and comes out to see us, buys stuff online, the tickets and the shirts, and it works out for us."

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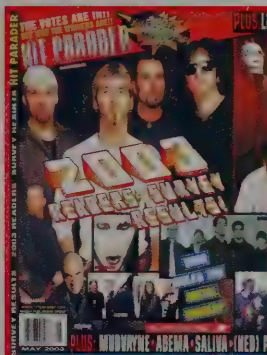
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Lamb Of God's new album, *Ashes Of The Wake*, has a lot riding on it. The band is one of the most popular underground metal acts today, thanks to its Pantera-sized grooves, monolithic riffs, and the trance-inducing vocals. But it's crunch time for Lamb Of God. The band was plucked from the indie metal ranks by Epic Records, and secured a plum spot on the 2004 *Ozzfest* side stage. Everyone is expecting *Ashes Of The Wake* to be one of the most important metal albums of 2004 and beyond, both critically and commercially. That's a lot of pressure for a bunch of beer-swilling rock and roll dudes from Virginia. But LOG is taking it all in stride, and they made a record that it loves through and through. Long-haired guitarist Mark Morton caught up with *Hit Parader* during the band's St. Louis stop of *Ozzfest*. He was brimming with excitement, and said, "Every song is different kid! I'm telling you, this is our best album, and it's so more diverse and it has more range." We at *Hit Parader* are inclined to agree, and we've been blaring the album at full blast since we got it. Morton opened up about big-time success, the band's togetherness, and the new album.

LAMB OF GOD

SACRIFICE

NECESSARY

Hit Parader: What was the pressure like when approaching this album? It's your major label debut, Epic is dumping money into the band, and it's your third album. It's a critical point in Lamb Of God's career and how did you handle it?

Mark Morton: All those things are true. There is pressure. There was more money given to us, from a high profile label, and the status of the band has grown. But we were given three months to write this record, which is nuts because every other record was written over year-long periods. We came off the *Headbanger's Ball* tour last December, and we got to go see our families for Christmas, and then we had to show up at the rehearsal space on January 2, and we had three months to get it done. We knew the profile of the album before we even wrote the first song. It was a challenge for each of us in every way, and we became closer as a band. We needed each other more than ever because we were on the spot, and we had to

deliver. It was the same rules, but it was the best album we could make.

HP: How happy are you with the results?

MM: If it sells ten copies, I don't care. It's the album I dreamed of making.

HP: That's important. People out there don't realize the pressure of making albums. It's a business as much as it is an art.

MM: We didn't have time to doubt ourselves. There was no luxury of time to "cry" about our situation. We admitted how much we needed each other and we pulled together and now we are tighter than ever and are more excited than ever about our careers. Where do we go from there? Well, that only matters in terms of what we feel like inside. There are people out there who know music, but at the end of the day, it's the five of us

who have to love the album. The first step in anyone else loving it is us being stoked on it.

HP: Lamb Of God has often been compared to Pantera, arguably the biggest breakout metal band of the '90s. How do you react to the Pantera comparisons?

MM: Honestly, I understand the reference to Pantera. I understand that reference as much as people saying we sound like Meshuggah, too. But in our sound, there are also elements of bands like Slayer and Death. All

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

of those sonic comparisons make sense to me. But when the Pantera comparison comes, I think it's really about our image. It's reality. We have a Southern image going on, just like Pantera had their Texas image, and that's a more immediate parallel than saying we sound like Slayer and Meshuggah. Sonically, we're not any more Pantera than we are Slayer or Testament. But people draw the comparison to Pantera because of the presentation and the performance perspective. I don't mind that at all. They were a huge influence on me and my band. I love Pantera.

HP: How about the commercial end of things? Pantera was the first huge metal band in a long time that was really heavy, and so is Lamb Of God. But the big question is will LOG garner a Pantera-sized fanbase.

MM: On *The Great Southern Trendkill*, the title track is heaviest Pantera song ever, a song they wrote after all the success they had and after they released those big selling records. They never left the game at all. They disintegrated in their inner circle, but musically and from a relevance perspective, they were always on their game.

HP: Are you ready to take the metal baton from Pantera?

MM: I don't aspire to that. Lamb Is God is nothing but Lamb Of God. It makes no sense why we are here. Listen to *Burn The Priest* [Editor's Note: *Burn The Priest* is the original incarnation of Lamb Of God, and the name the band first went by] and track our career and you'll see that it's organic. So, I will not compare us to anyone else. We're doing our thing and it's ridiculous that we are now where we are. We still love the music we are writing and we love each other.

HP: That's the second time you've said that you love each other and that you've got closer as a band with this record. You guys met in college, right?



MM: Chris [Adler, drums] and John [Campbell, bass] and I were friends before we were a band and Willie [Adler, guitar] is Chris's brother, so it's really like a family. And Randy [Blythe, vocals] came in and we started this thing that has become our lives. The five dudes in this band, the girlfriends, the wives, the kids, and the best friends, and the management are all part of an extended family. Everyone that lives and breathes this thing every day, beyond going to a show on a Saturday night and or reading magazine articles, is family. A lot of people's lives are intertwined in this project and you care about each other. When someone has a problem, everyone has a problem. It's a family. We fight like families fight and we get along, too. That's how it is. We proved a lot to ourselves, and our confidence and morale have never been higher, and it's exciting for me to be able to say that to you, given that we're about to drop a major label record. I'm glad I'm not worried!

HP: How does *Ashes Of The Wake* fit with your previous discs, *As The Palaces Burn* and *New American Gospel*?

MM: We say this all the time, but we want every record to have its own identity, character and personality, and *Ashes* has that. It's not the record I thought we were going to make, actually. I had a light bulb in my head about the record we would make, and this is not that record. It's a different, special child. I thought we would make a clean, smooth, silky record, and but *Ashes* is a feisty, kicking, fire-breathing son-of-a-gun with its middle finger in the air. It was like having a child and having it be the rowdy metal kid! I wouldn't change a song.

HP: What's your favorite song on the album?

MM: That changes from day to day. But I like *Laid To Rest* and *The Faded Line*. The arrangement is so tight, and Randy, on this record, has grown immensely as a vocalist. It's awesome to watch him go. His show, his performance throughout the album is on a level he's never been before. Randy has grown into his own space, and he understands what's going on and how important it is to do a good job.

HP: The metal underground has flocked to Killswitch Engage, Shadows Fall and Lamb Of God. How does it feel to be a part of that Unholy Trinity?

MM: It's an amazing display of brotherhood. You would think it would be competitive, and it is, but in a friendly way. Everyone wants everyone to do well. If they do well, we do well. If we do well, they do well. The affiliation is so strong, and we root for each other, and the *Headbanger's Ball* tour was such a part of that. From a creative perspective, though, each band sounds completely different. We sound more like Unearth than we do Killswitch or Shadows. But we're closest to them, because career-wise, we've matured together, have toured together, and have grown together. We're bros, and we're not going to lose that and we want each other to do well. It's special, actually.

HP: Describe Lamb Of God's music as if I were someone who has never heard the band.

MM: There's lots of ways to answer that question. If I were to answer it off the cuff, I'd say we're the heaviest band you ever heard. But to someone who knows metal, I'd say we have equal elements of thrash, death metal and punk rock! We're rawer than some of the cats out there, and that's cool and it's part of our personality.

PHOTO: KEVIN ESTRADA

ALTER BRIDGE

A NEW BEGINNING

BY RAY MEYER

"We know the comparisons with Creed are there; we welcome them."

You may have loved them... you may have hated them. But no matter what your opinion may have been, there was no way you could have avoided Creed. That band sold over 30 million copies during their five-year run in the sun, with their heavy, religiously-inspired sound drawing as much heat from rock "purists" as it did praise from their legion of followers. Thus, when word began to filter through the rock world last year that Creed vocalist—and critical catalyst—Scott Stapp had departed the group, many wondered what the unit's remaining core members—guitarist Mark Tremonti and drummer Scott Phillips—would do. Well, it hasn't taken us long to find the answer to that one. With the recruitment of vocalist Myles Kennedy and the rehiring of bassist Brian Marshall—a member of Creed for their first two albums before being summarily dismissed by Stapp—Tremonti and Phillips have formed a new band, Alter Bridge.

"For us there is a combined level of excitement and fear about starting over," Tremonti said. "On a personal level, it does feel like it did before Creed's first album came out. But we learned a lot of lessons from that experience and thankfully we've been able to bring them along to Alter Bridge. For me it's no longer about the past, it's totally about the future. This band won't go out there and play Creed songs. That wouldn't be fair to the fans. This is a new band and a new beginning."

While it may be difficult for them to turn their backs on their highly successful stint with Creed, it's impossible to overlook the renewed excitement these rockers bring to Alter Bridge. Even Kennedy—who the others "discovered" when his previous band, the Mayfield Four, opened a series of tour dates for Creed back in 1998—realizes that this is a unit not designed to live off of past laurels. The hard rocking, back-to-basics approach the group has taken throughout their debut album, *One Day Remains*, marks them as a powerful new force on the contemporary music scene. And while Tremonti certainly hopes that many of Creed's fans hop on his new group's musical bandwagon, he realizes that he and his bandmates are going to have to work for everything they achieve with Alter Bridge.

"After all that Creed achieved professionally, I felt I needed to refocus on my personal goals," the guitarist said. "One of those goals was to get back to my rock and roll roots. After Creed broke up, I started jamming with Scott and we quickly realized that we still shared the same musical vision. What surprised both of us was that after being so busy over the last five years, we were very anxious to get right back out there and start up all over again."

Within weeks of initiating their latest musical project the Tremonti/Phillips duo realized it was time to start expanding their unit. The first call went out to long-time friend Marshall, who admits that he was somewhat taken aback to hear from his former bandmates. "I could tell from the sound of Mark's voice that he as really excited about this project," the bassist said. "There was no question that I wanted to be part of it. The amazing thing is that as soon as we started to play together it just clicked—it

was like we hadn't skipped a beat."

Of course, despite the reunification of Creed's musical roster, there was one glaring "weakness" remaining in the Alter Bridge lineup... the all-important vocal slot. Especially in light of the often-dominating role that Stapp played within Creed, Tremonti and company were well aware that they needed to find a frontman who was not only charismatic but also had a voice able to cut through this unit's rough and ready sound. While they took their time in making their final decision, almost immediately their thoughts returned to Kennedy, who had impressed everyone during his show-opening stint six years prior. At the time Tremonti contacted him, Kennedy was in the midst of planning a solo album. But as soon as he got wind of the musical direction of Alter Bridge, he quickly "altered" his rock and roll plans.

"When the call came from Mark I was immediately intrigued," Kennedy said. "To be honest, at that time I was very content to just work on my own music and never be in another rock and roll band. But as soon as I met them, I knew that they were the antithesis of the prototypical rock and roll stars, and working with them has made me feel more empowered than ever before."

"We had sent Myles a tape and asked him to lay down some vocals," Tremonti added. "As soon as we heard what he had done we knew we had found our guy. He brings so much energy and passion to his vocals—when we met him the future just fell into place."

Named after a bridge located outside of Tremonti's hometown, Detroit, Alter Bridge soon went to work on the material now featured on *One Day Remains*. Drawing on influences as diverse as metal, pop and soul, the band quickly laid down a series of songs, including *Shed My Skin*, *Open Your Eyes* and *Find the Real*, which took those varied sources of inspiration and then magnified upon them. The resulting musical mix is one rarely heard in the lexicon of 21st Century hard rock, for contained within its rhythms are elements of melody and melodrama that instantly make any listener sit up and take notice.

"The music we've made does cross a lot of boundaries," Tremonti said. "With this album we're trying to learn from our past but begin with a different perspective. There are a lot of themes on this record that are very personal, but at the same time they all touch on universal themes that everyone can relate to on some level."

Obviously these guys are ready for the endless Creed comparisons that have already begun to come their way. While they perhaps would prefer to put their previous band in their rear view mirror, they remain extremely proud of the impact Creed had on the rock world—and of the success they enjoyed. They know the idea of lightning striking twice in the same place is remote, at best. But this unit feels that they've got the talent and the determination to make their latest run at rock's platinum rung a successful one.

"After writing and rehearsing this material we feel we've made the right career choices," Tremonti said. "We know the comparisons are there, and we welcome them."



ALTER BRIDGE

HP



CRADLE OF FILTH

Nynphetamine, the title of Cradle of Filth's latest Black metal opus, doesn't roll trippingly off of the tongue. But that's exactly the way band leader/mastermind/ vocalist Dani Filth wants it to be. You see, according to this British based-band, *nothing* should be made simple or easy. Throughout their decade-long lifespan, this esoteric unit has chosen to find beauty amid the rubble, sensuality among the horror and love among the ruins of our current civilization. For Mr. Filth and his bandmates, Paul Allender (guitar), James McKillboy (guitar), Dave Pubis (bass), Martin Foul (keyboards) and Adrian Erlandsson (drums), life is perpetually about contrast and convolution, and it is that off-center philosophy that both fills and inspires this decidedly different unit's metallic attack.

"I believe we reached a creative peak with our last album, *Damnation and a Day*," Filth said. "So when it came time to start considering what to do next, there was a bit of a dilemma. How do we top what we've already done? The answer was to go in a radically different direction. We didn't want to be tied to a single concept

shows featuring "virgins" dripping in fake blood and a bad-boy image filled with potty-mouth slogans and dastardly T-shirt designs. Throw in some wickedly satirical lyrical concepts, and some "Banned in London" attitudes, and you have the heart and soul of the Cradle of Filth artistic ethic. Despite all of their best efforts, however, the simple fact is that most of America still hasn't caught on to the essence of this decidedly Euro-metal "phenomenon" and after listening to such *Nynphetamine* tracks as *Mother of Abominations* and *Filthy Little Secrets*, either you'll understand what all the commotion is about, or you won't.

"There is definitely a style of European metal that for whatever reason has never really risen above cult status in America," Filth explained. "I believe that Cradle of Filth is among the leaders of that style of highly progressive, highly intense metal. But we realize whether or not that fully translates over to American audiences still remains to be seen."

Despite the apparent spell they've cast over the European rock media, it would still be easy to quickly and superficially

"How do we top what we've already done?"

CRADLE OF FILTH DISHIN' THE DIRT

BY ROB ANDREWS

for the album this time—we wanted to feel free to mix styles at a moment's whim. We wanted to create an album that thrived in its diversity as well as on its sonic precision. We wanted to create something really incredible... we wanted to create *Nynphetamine*."

It still remains to be seen if Cradle of Filth's latest opus will serve as the spark that will ignite a fury of band adulation on this side of the Atlantic. With groups like Slipknot, Marilyn Manson and to a lesser extent Mudvayne, still proving the commercial and artistic rewards of the "theatrical rock" ideal, perhaps after ten years of trying, Filth and his boys will finally begin to enjoy their just rewards around the entire hard rock kingdom. With major label support and distribution behind their latest release, this may indeed prove to be the moment of CoF's arrival as significant players upon the world's metal stage.

"This is an incredible opportunity for us," Filth said. "To have a major label behind us around the world is all that we could have asked for. But we're not trying to fit into any perceived 'trend' in America or anywhere else. We're doing what we do best—playing extreme metal music with our own theatrical overtones still very much in place."

There's no denying that the formula used by Cradle of Filth throughout their career have already paid some major dividends. Indeed, this unit ranks among the biggest heavy metal bands in the world—though some of you probably have never even heard a note that they've played. Fact is, while they may lack the instant household recognition of a Linkin Park or Slipknot on this side of the Big Pond, over in the band's European home base, Cradle of Filth is clearly more than just another shock rock contingent—they're a true legendary force.

Such a notion begs a key question to be asked: How has this British contingent made such a strong impact overseas while leaving the vast majority of State-side metal heads in the dark? To the uninitiated that one's rather hard to explain. Just picture stage

dismiss Cradle of Filth as yet another of those often vile, quasi-satanic, complex-for-complexity's sake acts that seem to enjoy living out eternity on the rock and roll periphery. But if you were to do that, you just may be passing on one of the most ambitious, creative and overpowering bands currently operating within the heavy metal sphere. In style and spirit, this unit's latest collection of highly controversial, eminently sinister and undoubtedly heavy tales are a far cry from what one might consider prime 21st Century metal fare. But in Cradle of Filth's ever-capable hands, the music on *Nynphetamine* assumes a power and grandeur that clearly marks it as an important metallic offering.

It should be fascinating to see exactly how State-side hard rock fans respond to Cradle of Filth's latest opus. Will they react to the band in the same fanatical manner as many of their European metallic brethren have been doing since the very start of CoF's career? Or will the ever-cool American rock brigade choose to once again turn their collective backs on this unit's decidedly different rock and roll style? While those involved with promoting *Nynphetamine* obviously hope that the former scenario proves accurate, even they realize that this group's music may simply be too intense and too *different* even for Manson-loving, Slipknot-embracing State-side fans to fully accept.

"America is the great frontier for us," Filth said. "Conquering Europe has been a great experience for us, but it hopefully is just the beginning. We realize that with *Nynphetamine* we have our best opportunity to break through around the globe. We know that we already have a strong fan base there because we've been able to play in front of them on occasion. This time we want to do it right—the Cradle of Filth way. We want to pull out all the stops. The music is there, the forces that need to promote it are ready, all seems ready to go."

FROM THE HP VAULT

Each month we bring you an incredible feature direct from the voluminous **Hit Parader** vault—an article that appeared on these hallowed pages exactly ten years ago! Without changes, editing or updates, these stories provide an amazing glimpse into this thing we call rock and roll, dealing with the form's most famous—and in some cases, infamous—stars. So direct from our Dec. 1994 issue is this “vintage” interview with the inimitable Ronnie James Dio.

Life is never boring when you're Ronnie James Dio. Throughout a 25-year career, which has seen this pint-sized powerhouse front such bands as Uriah Heep, Rainbow, Black Sabbath and his own Dio, ol' RJD has always fought to do things his way—often to the consternation of the equally strong-willed musicians he's worked with. From Ritchie Blackmore to Tony Iommi, everyone has respect for Dio's unmatched vocal skills and dynamic stage presence. But there's that *other* side of his nature that just seems to drive his fellow rockers crazy. Unlike virtually everyone else in the rock biz—Ronnie James Dio may just be too damn smart for his own good, and that intelligence has caused him more than his fair share of trouble. But today, with his most recent Sabbath fiasco behind him, and a new version of Dio about to be born, RJD seems to be a happy fella—or at least as happy as this chronic worrier can get.

“I feel best when I'm controlling my own band,” he said. “I'm the first to admit that rejoining Sabbath was a difficult task in some ways. But at the time it seemed like a good move—a smart move. My last few albums with Dio had been somewhat disappointing on a number of levels, and I sincerely felt in my heart that with a few more years of maturity the Sabbath thing could work. I believed that we had started writing an interesting musical book a number of years earlier, and we had never been able to write the final chapter. Well, we did write that final chapter, and it was a very good chapter—it just ended somewhat strangely.”

As many of you may remember, the second Dio/Sabbath partnership ran aground in late 1992 when Sabbath was invited by Ozzy Osbourne to perform at his “farewell” concert. For whatever reason, Dio immediately balked at the move, indicating that if Sabbath were to show at the event, it would have to be without him. Always a man of his word, when Sabbath did take the stage that

night it was with none other than former Judas Priest and current Fight vocalists Rob Halford at the controls. While no official announcement about Dio parting Sabbath was offered, it was quickly apparent that this musical reconciliation had quickly run its course. And then when word came that Ozzy and Sabbath were planning on touring together (plans that came awry last summer) it was obvious that Mr. Dio was about as welcome in Sabbath circles as a bad case of the flu.

“I've heard many people say that my decision was a personal thing against Ozzy,” Dio stated. “The fact is that nothing could be further from the truth. I have great respect for Ozzy, but I don't think he shares that respect for me. I do admit that my advice to the rest of Sabbath was not to play the Ozzy concert, but only because we had our own show in Los Angeles at roughly the same time. I didn't understand why Sabbath needed to play second on the bill to anyone at that particular time. I am honestly sorry that things didn't work out for Ozzy and Sabbath. I only wish them the best.”

Immediately following his departure from Sabbath, Dio apparently went underground. While the Sabbath/Ozzy reunion talk filled the rock wires, RJD just lay low plotting his next move. He knew that he would have to be careful because, as he indicated earlier, the success of his previous Dio discs had been in a steady decline. He was well aware that his record label wouldn't be waiting with open arms. It would take some fast talking, some clever maneuvering and some solid music to get the label back on his side. For Dio, such moves proved to be fairly simple. Within a few months he had assembled a new band featuring former World War III leader Tracy G. on guitar, former Dokken rocker Jeff Pilson on bass and long-time Dio associate Vinny Appice on drums.

**“I freely admit
that I'm happiest
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It's not to be
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it's just that I know
things are going to
get done that way.”**

The band went into the studio to cut a few demo tracks that managed to instantly wow those that needed to be wowed.

"Even when I rejoined Sabbath my plan was to someday get another version of Dio together," he said. "I freely admit that I'm happiest when I'm in charge. It's not to be dictatorial by any means—it's just that I know things are going to get done

that way. In Sabbath, even this time around, it seemed like nobody wanted to take control, to make the tough decisions. This has been the most democratic version of Dio I've ever been involved with, but I'm still very willing to make the tough calls. That's what needs to be done, and if I ruffle a few feathers by doing that, so be it."

Ruffling feathers has never been a problem for Dio, and in 1994, he seems intent to ruffle just as many as ever. On his band's new album, **Strange Highways**, the "new and improved" Dio have decided to go right for the jugular, playing a brand of hard-hitting metal that seems to have virtually disappeared from the scene. There are few homages to commercialism here and even fewer nods to the "alternative" scene. And while Dio admits a grudging admiration for much of the new-breed metal that's currently dominating the scene, he's not about to change his tune for anyone or anything. Yes, the music on this album is more cutting edge and contemporary, focusing on mankind's ills rather than on the image of hopeful "wishing wells" and "rainbows" that always peppered past Dio compositions. Yet, such cuts as *Evolution* and *Give Her The Gun* are classic Dio from first wall-shaking riff to last.

"I'm not about to start trying to play copycat," he said. "I've gone through this so many times before. When L.A. started to become hot a decade ago and so-called 'glam' was the in thing, there was certainly no temptation on my part to follow suit. And now, with all the grunge and alternative, there's still no temptation. I know what I do, and I think I do it as well as anyone. I am glad to see that with most of the newer metal bands that the focus has returned to the music and not to the way somebody dresses or looks. That's healthy. But the music we make is classic and timeless. I've never wanted to be trendy."

While no one will ever accuse him of being a trend monger, one couldn't help but ask Dio how he viewed the current rash of Death Metal bands, many of whom cite bands like Sabbath as main inspirations. As one might expect from the ever-perceptive RJD, he shot from the hip when it came to discussing metal's latest trends. "If those bands are adding something new, then it's fine, but if all they're doing is rehashing old Sabbath riffs, what's the point?"

And speaking of Sabbath, we couldn't let Dio escape without asking how he felt about the failed Sabbath/Ozzy reunion. "I wasn't surprised that things fell apart," he said. "You're dealing with some strong willed people there, some of whom don't know exactly what they want to do. That's a dangerous combination. My attitude from the very start was 'when I see it, I'll believe it.' It was just like all the talk of Ozzy's 'retirement'. I knew he wasn't going to retire. I do wish both Sabbath and Ozzy the best—let both their albums reach Number Two on the charts—as long as ours is Number One."

LYRICALLY SPEAKING

the story behind the song

BY RENEE DAIGLE

IT'S MEANT TO BE!

The expression "*Meant To Be*" for some people can be thought as wishful thinking and for others as an act of doing! As you know, the writers of **Lyrical Speaking** are in the word business, so we like to think of ourselves as modern day poets, daydreamers, or even philosophers—who like to believe that with hard work and determination things are "meant to be!"

Speaking of which, **Lyrical Speaking** sat down with singer, songwriter, and guitarist, Jonathan Foreman, from the San Diego-based band, Switchfoot. We couldn't wait to talk with him about his band's single, *Meant To Live*, songwriting advice, and, of course, the story behind the song.

"That song is emotionally charged for me," discloses Jon. "I feel like although it's in the third person

I would be that song, that person was talking about. I think, not in a coincided way or anything like that, but a lot of these songs are me in a sense of a diary or journal entry or something like that, you know what I mean. I feel like that it's a good place to write from because it's an honest place and so it can be a little tricky wearing your heart on your sleeve, but I feel at the same time it's a rewarding place to be—until the lines: *Fumbling his confidence and wondering if the world is passing him by*—I felt those lines," remembers Jon.

"The chorus for me the ray of light in the song, the verses is a little bit darker, but the chorus is very straight forward—just about how, *'we were meant to live for more than all of this.'*"

"We so get caught up with the new cell phone, the new girlfriend, and the new whatever a lot of times it's good to get your head above the water and realize that *we are meant to live for more than that*. I think the bridge for me when it all comes around—and the thing *'we want more than this world has to offer, we want more than the wars of our fathers.'* Just the cyclical living we get caught in."

So, Jon, what's the story behind the lyrics? "The pains and trials that I have been through, the things that the fires that I have been through, I am sure have forced those lyrics."

Which tracks on **The Beautiful Let Down** mean the most to you, and why? "When we play them live, certain songs mean a lot. I mean, *Meant To Live* is a fun song to play live, because everyone sings along to the lyrics is a great thing! For me, I'll step back from the mic and have a 1,000 people singing back louder than you are—it's an amazing thing! You know, for me, music got me through some really tough times to be that band for somebody else is an honor."

Speaking of **The Beautiful Let Down** where did you come up with the album title? "I guess it's kind of about the paradox of the beauty and pain of living. Everything in life no matter how beautiful it is—has a touch of pain. No matter what goes on with the painful things we go through there's usually a better beauty in them as well."

How do you craft a story into lyrical form, Jon? "It's a hit and misses process... I don't know... I wish I knew better because than I would be able to

do it, laughs Jon. "I think something for me, I'm still learning how to do, um, I love writing songs, and it's my favorite thing to do. It's my release, you know, it's three o'clock in the morning and you're trying to figure out what existence means, and, why we're hear on this earth and sometimes a song can touch places that a simple conversation can't. Yeah for me, you never write a song just to write a song, you write to change the world. You write a song to start a fire. You want when people hear your song to magically explode or turn into butterflies or something, you don't write a song just to write a song. You write a song to create something much bigger than just a song. I think every time I go into write a song that's the goal to make something explode and that's something that you never achieve, so you keep hungering for 'that song!'"

Hey, Jon, what's your secret on constructing a song? "I am big on syllables. If the syllables are right, you can tell what the song is about just by the way it comes off your tongue, you know. Sometimes that's just as important as the meaning. For me, that's just as important as writing the song just figuring out where the syllables fit together not only as the meaning of the words."



"We'll be on tour in a town near you soon, reveals Jon."

What's the secret to your songwriting success, Jon? "It comes from some sort of unrest. Something that I am dealing with. Some sort of trouble. I heard that dreams, you dream about problems that you're trying to work out in your head and maybe songwriting is the same way. Where you're chewing on something with your fingers and your tongue."

How hard is it to match the words up with the music? "It can be hard; however, for me I try to write them at the same time; because, your fingers and tongue are at the same place. You know, where as if you come up with one first it's hard to figure out where you were and you have to get back to that space before you write the other half of the song, but yeah, the goal for me is to write them at the same time."

Jon, do you have any songwriting tips to survive the roller coaster ride? "I guess my tip would be write lots of songs. I feel songwriting is a craft. There are two aspects to songwriting—there's the art and the craft, and the art is the part that is where lightning strikes and something magical happens and you can't recreate and you can't know where it came from—it's something bigger than you."

"The crafting part is what happens when you have to figure out what you have to do with the art, you know, that's the part the only way that you're going to get better at it is by doing it a lot and so the craft aspect is write a song every day for a month and I guarantee you'll get better at it. I've done that. It's an exercise and a great journal to keep. You write your verse and your chorus and then a bridge and then you go to bed."

On a personal note: "Life is short let's live it well! These are songs about that, I suppose than anything else!"

For more information about **Switchfoot**, please visit them on the web at www.switchfoot.com.



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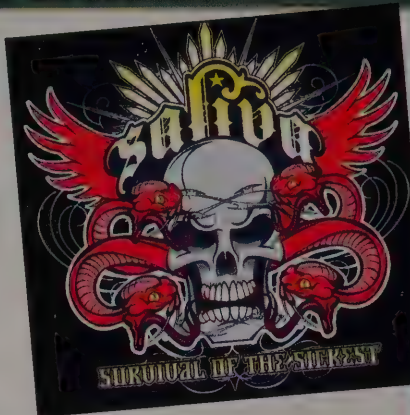
HIT OR MISS

REVIEWS OF THE NEWEST CDs

SALIVA, SURVIVAL OF THE SICKEST

Saliva are angry! That's the emotion that apparently fuels much of the music on their latest release, **Survival of the Sickest**. Sure, still there are the sing-along choruses, and the slight hint of hip-hop that made the band's first two disc's major success stories. But this time around, vocalist Josey Scott and his boys have really put the pedal to the metal, in the process creating the most intense and intimidating collection that this Memphis-based hit squad has yet produced. With the album's title cut already proving to be a break-out hit, this one may prove to be Saliva's most successful outing yet!

GRADE: B+



PAPA ROACH, GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER

Papa Roach have been many things to many people during their relatively brief stay at the top of the contemporary music kingdom. Part pop poets, part hard rock henchmen, this California-based unit fronted by the charismatic Jacoby Shaddix has enjoyed the fruits of their multi-faceted labors. Once again on their latest release, **Getting Away With Murder**, to PR gang stretch the limits of the hard rock empire by injecting their propulsive sound with a variety of cutting edge ingredients. When it works, which is more often than not, the stuff rocks to the core. Even when it occasionally misfires, you at least have to tip your cap to this unit's inventiveness.

GRADE: B



MARILYN MANSON, LEST WE FORGET

The mere concept of us quickly forgetting the degree of musical and cultural impact that Marilyn Manson has had on contemporary society is hard to imagine. Thus the title of Manson's new "great hits" collection, **Lest We Forget**, features the typical degree of MM's tongue-in-cheek coyness. Everything you'd expect is here—from *The Beautiful People* to 'mOBSCENE—with only a few the now-customary-hits-package "surprises" to enliven the proceedings. If you already own Manson's album catalog, this is one you may choose to pass upon. But if you're just getting into the wild, weird and wonderful world of MM, then this one is nothing short of a must-have!

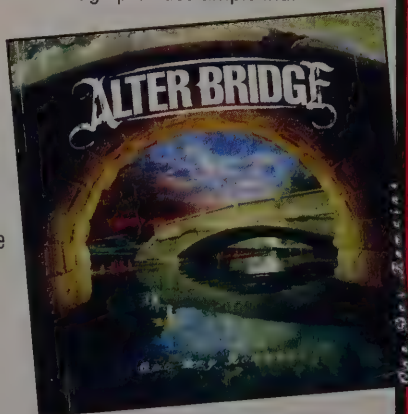
GRADE: B



SCORPIONS, UNBREAKABLE

Another "classic" metal band that's apparently been too-long away from the scene is the Scorpions. The Teutonic Terrors ruled the mid-80s "hair metal" scene with their unforgettable Euro-metal flavored anthems. But in recent years—while they've released a series of discs and continually toured the world—the Scorpions have made little impact on State-side fans. All that may well change with **Unbreakable**, a slice of CD magic that once again proves why there's no replacement for experience when it comes to creating great hard rock music. Though there may be a tad too many ballads for some metallic tastes, when the Scorpions crank it up—which they do often on this collection—there are still few better bands around.

GRADE: B



ALTER BRIDGE, ALTER BRIDGE

When Creed fell apart earlier this year, many within the rock community wondered how the band's splintered members would fare. Well, Alter Bridge provides ample indication that the band's musical core (guitarist Mark Tremonti, drummer Scott Phillips and bassist Brian Marshall) will do just fine. By adding dynamic vocalist Myles Kennedy to their musical mix, this unit has effectively severed the most blatant ties with their highly successful past, while at the same time their multi-dimensional song writing and inspired musicianship harkens back to some of their best earlier work. Certainly for every Creed fan, there was someone who hated that band with a passion. But with much of their self-important hubbub now cast aside, it would seem as if Alter Bridge are destined to follow the same platinum-covered path that led their former band to stardom.

GRADE: B+

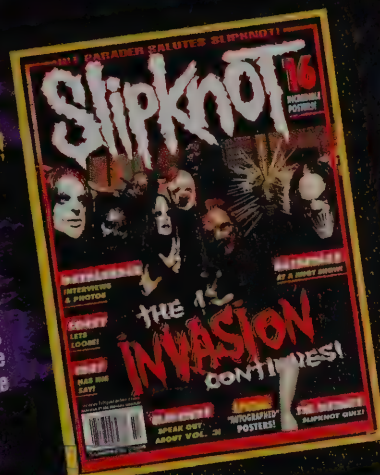
HIT PARADER
PRESENTS

THE ULTIMATE SLIPKNOT

POSTER MAGAZINE!! 16 INCREDIBLE POSTERS PLUS OUTRAGEOUS INTERVIEWS!

Things are hotter than ever in the world of Slipknot. Indeed, in many ways this is the start of a new day, a new era and possibly a new revolution for the one and only Knot. For d.j. Sid Wilson, bassist Paul Gray, guitarist James Root, drummer Joey Jordison, keyboardist Craig Jones, percussionist Chris Fehn, percussionist Shawn "Clown" Crahan, guitarist Mick Thompson and vocalist Corey Taylor (also known to their ever-loyal followers as 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8) it's time to focus all of their collective energies into once again becoming the most infamous heavy metal band on Earth. Now with the appearance of their new album, Vol. 3 (The Subliminal Verses), and the start of their various world-wide tours, you'd have to be both blind and deaf not to note that this cover-all-wearing, mask-bearing, hard rocking unit from the wilds of Des Moines, Iowa, has returned to the scene just in time to give the entire metal world a much needed kick in the pants. With all that in mind, Hit Parader offers this salute to the one and only Slipknot in the form of our incredible poster special.

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CANDIRIA, *That Which Doesn't Kill You...*

(Type A, www.candiriamusic.com)

Candiria is the most original band to spring from the 718 area code in years. The Brooklyn quintet has earned critical accolades from mainstream music press since the late '90s, thanks to the band's fusion of rap, metal, hardcore, and jazz — yes, jazz. The band's previous albums, however, felt “samey,” despite being wholly original, caustic, and complicated, all at once. When the band was involved in a near fatal van accident while on tour in September 2002, its perspectives on life and its music were subject to change. It's as though Candiria had an epiphany when writing and recording *That Which Doesn't Kill You...* The band brings down its mathematical songs structures down a notch, making things easier to follow. It also experiments with clean vocals, and weaving its jazz breakdowns into the fabric of its sonic quilt, as opposed to laying them on top. *Down* is the most un-Candiria like track, and reminds us of Disturbed, begging the question “Is Candiria getting down with the sickness?” Nah. It's one song out of ten that veers off Candiria's already quirky path.

RATING: ***

CANDIRIA

WHAT DOESN'T KILL YOU...

CANDIRIA: "WHAT DOESN'T KILL YOU WILL ONLY MAKE YOU STRONGER." AT DEAD BURN THE DEAD TO THE NAMELESS KING IS BLOOD IN REMOTE FOREST IN THE POINTE
OF LIGHT IN THE DARK SOLUTION BY A MAN IN A GUN IN THE REMOTE FOREST



A18, *Dear Furious*

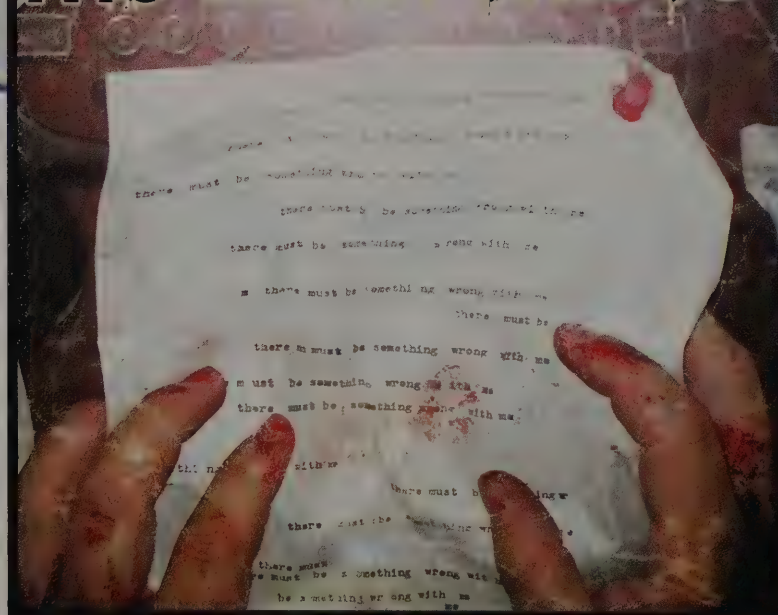
(Victory, www.victoryrecords.com)

A18—that's shorthand for Amendment 18—call Southern California home. But *Dear Furious*, the quintet's second album for Victory Records, sounds as

though this band was reared at NYC's famed punk rock/hardcore club, CBGB. *Dear Furious* is angrier than a starving pit bull. Angrier, in fact, than a starving pit bull being teased by someone holding a raw steak 3 inches from its face. All you need to do is check the lyrics of *Stab You Through Everything*, where singer Isaac Goulb wishes ill on everyone who has ever come in contact with someone who has wronged him. A18 ain't playing around when it comes to hate. But it's not mindless nor is it random. Goulb and company's rage is focused at specific people, places and things. Sonically, *Dear Furious* melds fast, three-chord hardcore with lots of breakdowns, those chunky parts at the end of the song that you can't help but bob your head to. For Fans Of: Madball, Biohazard.

RATING***

A18·DEAR FURIOUS



REMEMBERING NEVER, *Women And Children Die First*

(Ferret, www.ferretstyle.com)

“Market Saturation” is a term used when the marketplace is stuffed to its gills with a product. The supply meets the demand, and then some. In the marketplace of extremely heavy, underground metalcore, there is saturation. There are more albums and bands than there is disposable income of youngsters. So why does Remembering Never's *Women And Children Die First* stand out? Well, the sarcastic title sure does make us chuckle. And we also like Rem Nev's ability to write a thought provoking lyric. Also, the best way to hammer home the heaviest part of your song is to insert a pretty, melodic part right smack dab in the middle. Rem Nev is adept at doing so on *Women And Children Die First*. Right before or after its shrieky, harmonically distorted guitar parts, the band positions a gut-wrenching clean vocal. It's always good to have a bipolar

personality, in music at least. For Fans Of: Poison, The Well, Shai Hulud, Martyr AD\

RATING:****

BLACK LABEL SOCIETY, *Hangover Music Vol. VI*

(Spitfire, spitfirerecords.com)

Hangover Music Vol. VI is not your typical Zakk Wylde/Black Label Society album. Wylde is known for his work as Ozzy's main axe, and he's a man capable of playing Randy Rhoads' stuff. *Hangover Music Vol. VI* operates off a doom 'n' gloom battery; it's a laid back, mellow, acoustic release, which is a divergence from form for Wylde, who is known for knuckling down and belting out molten metallic riffs. Sure, Wylde's dominance over a fretboard is immediately evident, but it's almost a culture shock for fans of Wylde's style. Not only does he sing (in his trademark, whiskey soaked howl which is undeniable influenced by his boss, Mr. Osbourne) and play acoustically, he also plays piano. It's almost as though Hangover Music Vol. VI is Wylde's homage to grunge. Hell, there is even a song called *Layne*, which pays all due respect to the late great Alice In Chains frontman. There's a lot to be said for an artist branching out and testing his creativity. Nice work, Zakk. That's Mr. Wylde to you. For Fans Of: Ozzy Osbourne, Alice In Chains.

RATING:****

ALEXISONFIRE, *Watch Out!*

(Equal Vision, www.equalvision.com)

First things first: you say their name like this: "Alexis-On-Fire," not "Alex-Is-On-Fire." Secondly, don't hate Alexisonfire because they are from Canada. South Park might make fun of Canada with ruthless, reckless abandon, but Alexisonfire's *Watch Out!* has enough moxie to redeem our neighbor to the North. *Watch Out!* is a collection of emotional hardcore not unlike early '90s underground stars Quicksand. There's plenty of pretty singing, wring-your-hands screaming, and heartfelt emotion present on this disc. There's a buzz

ALEXISONFIRE



"WATCH OUT!"



black label society *hangover music*



of energy to each track on the album, one that never exhausts itself. But you might be tired by the time the album's last note fades out. For Fans Of: Quicksand, Boy Sets Fire, From Autumn To Ashes.

RATING:***

FAR, *Water & Solutions + DVD Extras*

(Immortal, www.immortalrecords.com)

Far's *Water & Solutions* was originally released in 1998, and the album was largely ignored, even though it brilliantly combined the lush, melodic rock of something like Radiohead's *The Bends* and the bottom-heavy thud of Deftones' *Adrenaline*. Many say that if *Water & Solutions* was released nowadays, the band would be bigger than Elvis, given this genre's expansion in the past few years. Nevertheless, the fine folks at Immortal, Far's original label (and Korn's!) were bright enough to re-issue *Water & Solutions* with a companion DVD, loaded to the gills with live footage, both professional and amateur quality. For Fans Of: Thursday, Thrice, Dashboard Confessional.

RATING:***

WOLF, *Evil Star*

(Prosthetic, www.prostheticrecords.com)

Warning: do not play Wolf's *Evil Star* near glass, valuables or windows. If you do, they'll surely shatter, thanks to vocalist Niklas A. Olsson's high-pitched wails, which are reminiscent of King Diamond. The Swedish trio plays old school power metal in the vein of Judas Priest and Iron Maiden. Translation? Wolf's compositions often exceed the five-minute mark, and are full of noodly guitar solos and lyrical gems like "Devil Moon / A face in the dark / Lights a sinister spark." *Evil Star* will satisfy lifelong metalheads with a passion for power metal as well as neophyte metal fans looking to get an education in heavy metal's history and varied genres. If you like to wear bullet belts, denim jackets covered in patches and pins, Chuck Taylor sneakers, and long hair, then *Evil Star* is most certainly for you. For Fans Of: Judas Priest, King Diamond.

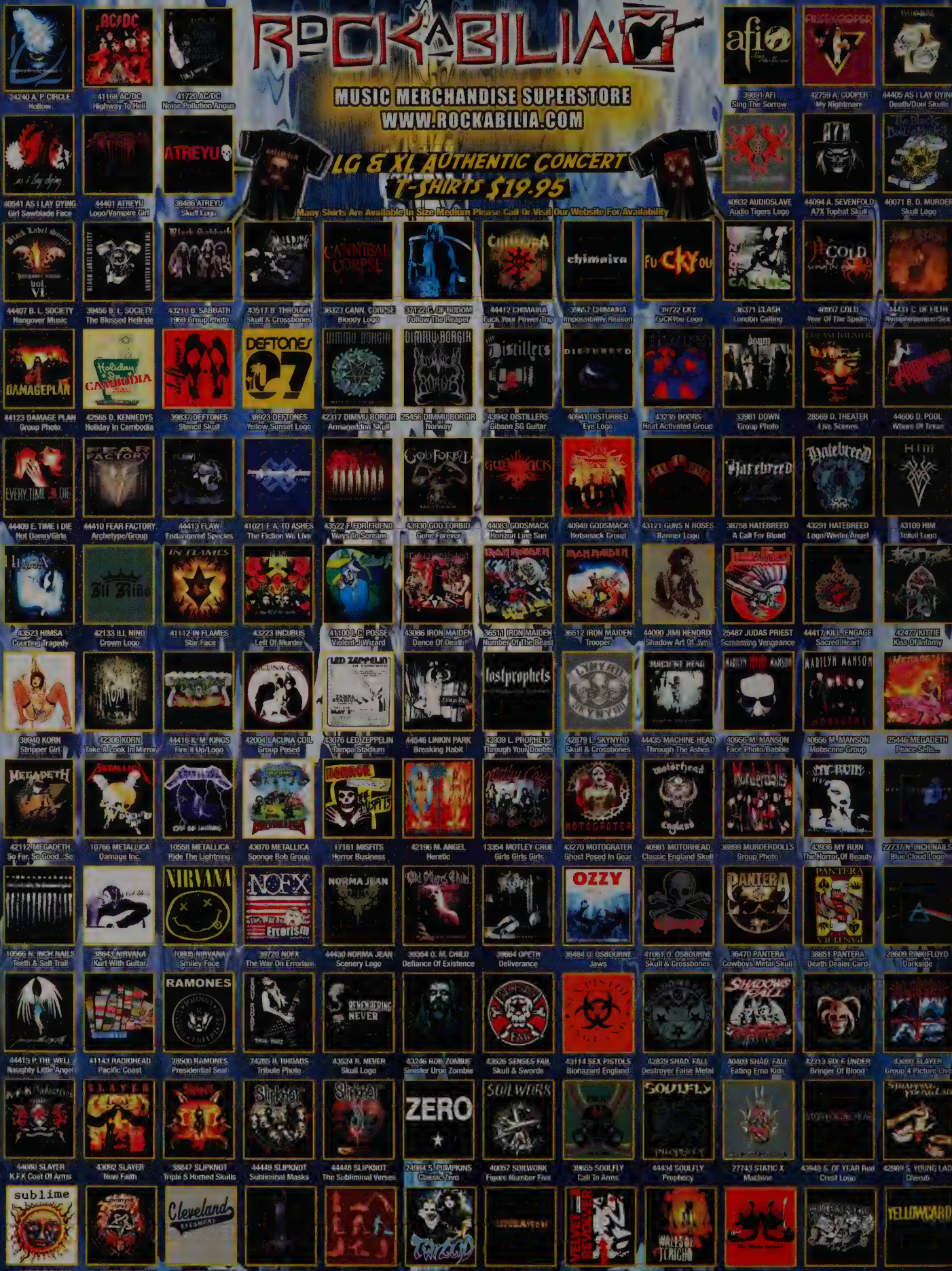
RATING:**

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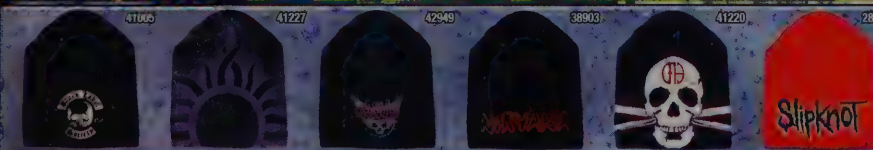
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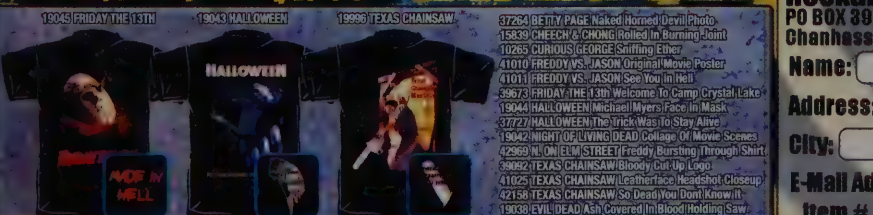
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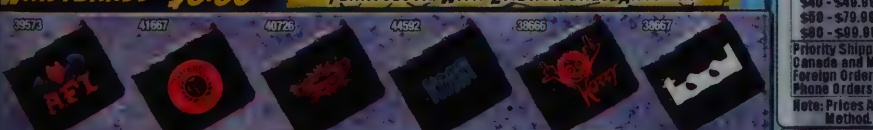
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TOYS IN THE ATTIC

THE COOLEST GAMES & GEAR

BY RENEE DAIGLE

DEATH METAL

Death Metal: A Documentary DVD directed by Bill Zebub (Music Video Distributions) takes the viewer on an in-depth look into the world of death metal in this one-of-a-kind documentary.

The story is told in the first-person, which chronicles and anecdotes solely from the death metal musicians who shaped the genre, along with Type O Negative front man Peter Steele, who is included because of his extreme vocal contributions to the band Carnivore.

In addition to interview segments, **Death Metal: A Documentary** includes live footage, recent, and vintage video clips. The running time is a full two hours.

For more information about **Death Metal: A Documentary**, please visit them on the web at

www.musicvideodistributors.com

Death Metal

A Documentary

SHOUT AT THE DEVIL!

Attention: Crue fans! Toymaker, **Todd McFarlane** has immortalized the glam boys of rock—Vince Neil, Tommy Lee, Nikki Sixx and Mick Mars in a deluxe box set based off of their **Shout at the Devil** album.

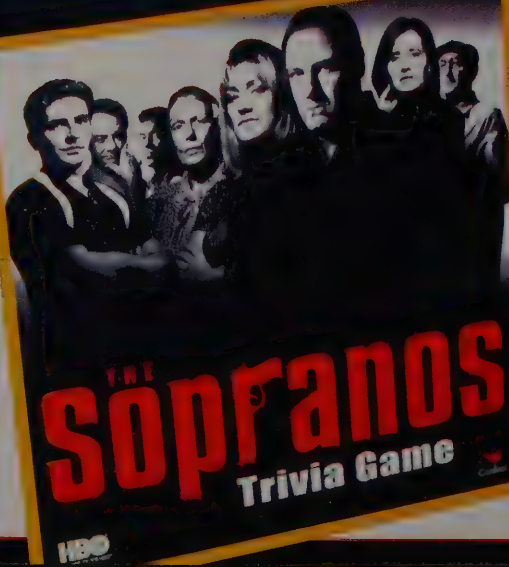
The set comes complete with Lee's elaborate drum set, Neil's microphone and stand, Sixx's bass and Mars' guitar.

Motley Crue was formed in Los Angeles in 1981, when bassist Sixx met up with drummer Lee, they recruited guitarist Mars and then vocalist Neil to form what would become the greatest metal band over the course of the next two decades!

For more information on

Motley Crue Delux Box Set, please visit

www.mcfarlane.com



THE SOPRANOS

The Sopranos Trivia Game is the poker-styled trivia game based on the HBO series comes equipped with a felt poker mat, scoring pad, a jumbo deck of trivia cards and poker chips, allowing players to "gamble" their way through the colorful, tricky questions about the show.

Designed to stump both a "family" novice as well as a "mob" guru, the questions, written by the author of *The Sopranos Family Cookbook*, has five levels

of difficulty. The gamer using their poker faces, bluffing abilities, and knowledge of the show, players must bet chips at each round of questions that include "who said that," "know your mob speak," and straight trivia, in an attempt to earn the most "money."

The player, who collects the most chips after three rounds of play, wins the game!

"THE GREAT ONE"

Thanks to legendary toymaker, **Todd McFarlane**, The Great One, Wayne Gretzky, has arrived—in the form of an action figure!

The **NHL Legends Series One** spotlight's

Gretzky in several on-ice action poses in uniforms representing all the National Hockey League teams he played for: *Edmonton Oilers, Los Angeles Kings, St. Louis Blues, and New York Rangers.*



Each figure is sculpted in an action pose with accurate period uniforms and equipment.

As the hockey connoisseur can recite verbatim, Gretzky holds virtually every offensive record in the National Hockey League, including 10 scoring titles and nine MVP Awards. He helped win four Stanley Cup Championships and three Canada Cup tournament titles during his illustrious career that included 18 consecutive All-Star Game appearances, and three All-Star MVP Awards.

For **NHL Legends Series One** and other **McFarlane** classics, please visit click onto www.mcfarlane.com.

GRETZKY NHL 2005

1989 Sports takes the ice with cover athlete and spokesman, Wayne Gretzky to launch **Gretzky NHL 2005**. This video game features fast-passed skating, precision passing, bone-jarring checks and players that convey the

power and emotion of their sport.

Additionally, there is an extensive list of gameplay modes including *Tournament Mode* (with customizable tournaments), *Franchise*

Mode (where gamers act as owners), *Online Mode* (with downloadable roster updates), and *Rivalry Mode*, (which sets the stage to revisit the ultimate heated match-up time after time).

By combining authentic gameplay, intuitive play controls and an enhanced presentation with the fast, fluid, hard-hitting intensity of arcade style play,



Gretzky NHL 2005 delivers the look, feel and passion of hockey and provides gamers with a true-to-life simulation.

For more information about **Gretzky NHL 2005**, please click onto www.989.com.

PlayStation 2



HOT SHOT GOLF FORE!

Psst... looking for a challenging game play that you've never played beFORE? Then look no further—back by popular demand, **Hot Shots Golf Fore!** by **PlayStation 2** is better than ever, but with a unique twist of its own! The editors at **HIT PARADER** agree that this game is exciting and is a must play—if your heart beats for the thrill of the game!

Hot Shots Golf Fore! offers the gamer more courses and golfers, more prizes and the return of miniature golf. This video game provides a variety of 15 different courses, ranging from challenging 18-hole layouts to demanding par three courses.

As the saying goes, "Practice makes perfect," as well as keeping with the favorites from the Clubhouse 34 in all in featuring new characters, and several popular **PlayStation 2** characters.

For more information about **Hot Shots Golf Fore!**, please click onto www.playstation.com.



TECH TALK WITH THE DATSUNS

BY RYAN ABRAHAM

One of the most time-honored expressions in all of rock and roll is "don't believe the hype." Well, just a year ago, with the release of their self-titled debut disc, the music biz publicity machine would have had us all believe that the Datsuns were ready to take over the world. They had the look, they had the sound, and they had the attitude needed to become, you guessed it, rock's Next Big Thing. Indeed, this New Zealand-based hard rock unit was seemingly destined to become the kind of band that put an exclamation point on an entire era—a multi-platinum, arena-filling, cover-grabbing, MTV-dominating super-group. Well... to put it mildly, it just didn't happen.

That's not to say that vocalist/bassist Dolf De Datsun, guitarist Christian Datsun, drummer Matt Datsun and guitarist Phil Datsun didn't come this close to turning all that oh-so-positive industry chatter into a reality. Their approach—which at the time was pegged as being equal parts Zeppelin-styled roar, T-Rex-generated swagger and AC/DC-induced sweat—did certainly raise both eyebrows and interest levels. But their updated version of the Classic Rock sound never seemed to catch on the way that many had hoped. But now, with the release of their second disc, **Outta Sight/Outta Mind** (produced by none other than Led Zeppelin's legendary John Paul Jones) it seems as if the Datsuns are out to prove all the commotion that still surrounds them is justified—even if this time around they're flying a bit lower on the rock and roll radar screen.

"All the talk wasn't our doing," Christian said. "We were just a bunch of guys from a far-away place that landed on American shores to make some music. We came over here to have some fun and play as often as we could. But I think all the information that came out about us turned off some people... I don't know. We do know that the States resisted us the first time around. But with this album we plan to go back to basics and see if we can get it to work a little bit better."

In all honesty, it seems as if things still aren't going exactly the way the Datsuns may have planned. While response to **Outta Sight/Outta Mind** has been uniformly positive, the band's plans to bombard the State-side rock populace with their music took a major hit when last summer's nation-covering Lollapalooza festival was killed off only weeks before it was set to launch. That left this quartet somewhat high and dry, with an endless summer featuring no major tour, and a wait until September for their new album to hit the American streets. Somehow they survived.

"Yeah, it was a blow to us when Lollapalooza was canceled," Christian said. "The album had come out in Europe in June, but it wasn't scheduled to come out in the States until September. We figured we'd just go out there and play our music—whether anyone had heard the new songs or not. It was a chal-

lenge, but exactly the kind of challenge we like."

The strategy of non-stop work has apparently begun to pay off for the Datsuns.

As proven by both the response to **Outta Sight/Outta Mind**, and their raucous live shows, this riff-happy, raunch-loving unit has begun to win over fans both near and far. They've done so by calling upon the long-dormant spir-its of some of rock's seminal forces to guide them and provide them with proper insight into what truly makes for great rock and roll music. Indeed, thanks to new songs like *Blacken My Thumb* and

That Sure Ain't Right, the Datsuns seem intent on proving to a young, naive generation weaned on the likes of grunge and

rap/metal what the "real thing" is all about.

"We're doing something that we really believe, something that's very natural for us," Dolf said. "We're not trying to save anything or anyone—and we're not trying to be anything that we're not. We know that a lot of people at this time like to say that the kind of music we're playing doesn't have a place. They like to say that guitar-rock is dead. Well, we don't think it is. All you need to do is to play it well and see how people respond."

Perhaps the most intriguing question surrounding the band's new disc is how they managed to lure the often-reclusive Jones into their production booth. While the former Led Zep bassist has earned praised for previous work with the likes of REM and Diamanda Galas, he had notoriously steered clear of any and all bands that had sited the Mighty Zep as a primary influence. All that apparently changed when he heard some of the Datsun's new material.

"We had admired John Paul's work with other bands—and of course, we admired his work with Led Zeppelin," Christian said. "So when the opportunity came to work with him we naturally thought it could be incredible... and it was! We recorded

"We've toured the world—now we've come to America to have some fun."



in England and recorded the album over a five week span. I know that may sound like a short time, but for us, it was very long. We tend to be very quick and very spontaneous in the studio."

The Datsuns have been working on their fast-'n-furious rock and roll style for almost a decade. It was all the way back in 1995 that the band's core members—Dolf, Matt and Phil—first got together and began rocking their island nation under the name of Trinket. After winning a variety of local Battle of the Bands competitions, the unit felt they were well on their way to international acclaim. But it wasn't until Christian joined on in 1997—and the unit renamed themselves the Datsuns—that things truly began to kick into high gear for this ambitious quartet.

Over the ensuing years, the band honed their sound to a cutting sharpness through constant live sets and a series of self-released singles that delighted their fast-growing following. Then in 2002 a big break came when the unit was invited to open a New Zealand tour for the White Stripes, who instantly became enamored with the band's infectious, explosive, over-the-top energy. A raucous tour of Europe, and a series of eye-popping State-side showcases, brought the group to major label attention. Now with two explosive discs under their collective belt, it would appear as if the Datsuns are finally ready to live up to their hype.

"We're not here to make any sort of important statement," Phil said. "All we want to do is play some rock and roll and have a little fun."

INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING

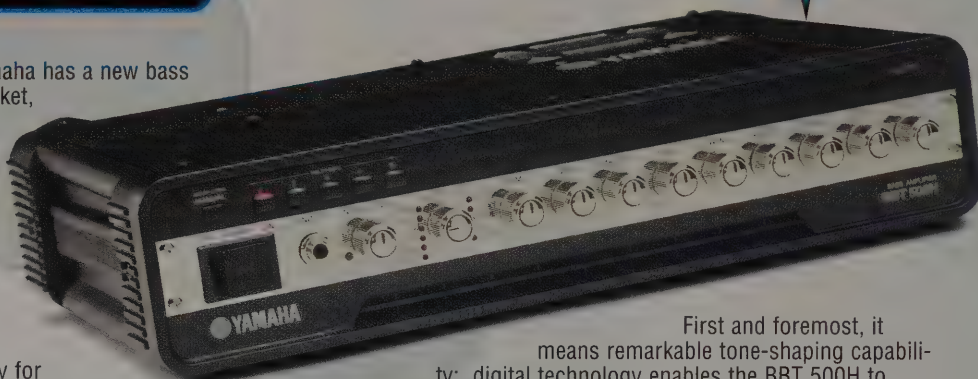
WRITTEN BY MICHAEL SHORE, COMPILED BY ILKO NECHEV

YAMAHA

When we say Yamaha has a new bass amp on the market, we mean a

NEW bass amp. The new Yamaha BBT 500H isn't just the first in a new series of powerful, programmable, lightweight, compact units. Yamaha says it's the world's FIRST all-digital bass amp—and as such, it inaugurates a whole new product category for bassists.

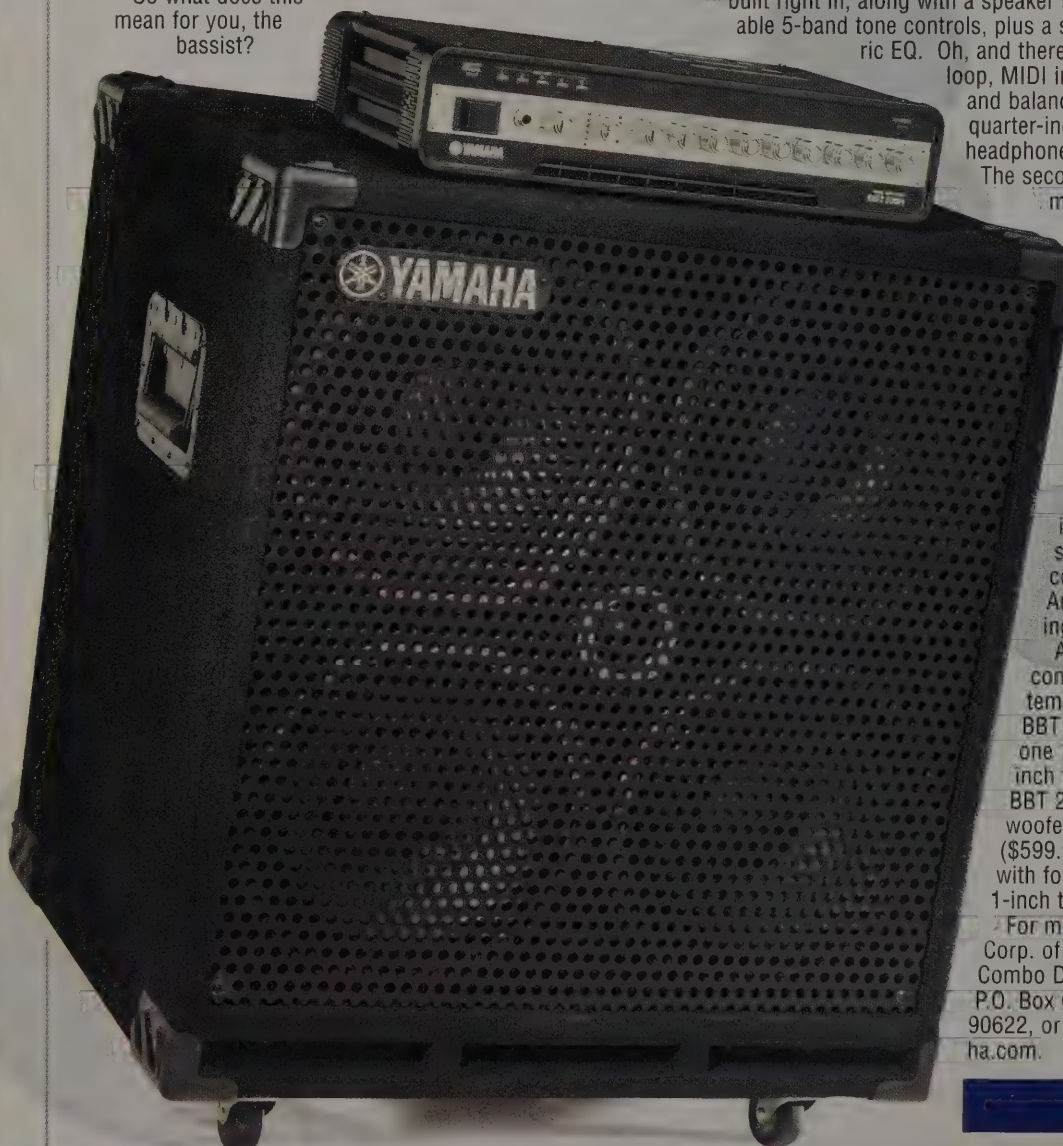
So what does this mean for you, the bassist?



First and foremost, it means remarkable tone-shaping capability: digital technology enables the BBT 500H to have no less than 11 vintage and modern amplifier sounds built right in, along with a speaker simulator, frequency-variable 5-band tone controls, plus a single-band fully parametric EQ. Oh, and there's also a built-in effects loop, MIDI in/out, quarter-inch line and balanced XLR outputs, two quarter-inch speaker outputs, and a headphone jack for practicing.

The second thing the BBT 500H means for the bassist is power: 500 watts into 2 ohms, 250 watts into 4 ohms. And finally, the BBT 500H means compactness: all of the above comes in a roadworthy package weighing only 8.5 pounds. Yes, it's "just" an amp with no speaker—but still, when you consider all that comes in it, this is really a classic case of "big things come in small packages." And well worth investigating at its \$949.99 price tag. And of course there are complementary speaker systems available to go with the BBT 500H: the BT 100S with one 10-inch woofer and a 1-inch tweeter (\$449.99); the BBT 210S with two 10-inch woofers and 1-inch tweeter (\$599.99); and the BBT 410S with four 10-inch woofers and 1-inch tweeter (\$799.99).

For more info write Yamaha Corp. of America, Pro Audio & Combo Division, Guitar Products, P.O. Box 6600, Buena Park, CA 90622, or go online to www.yamaha.com.

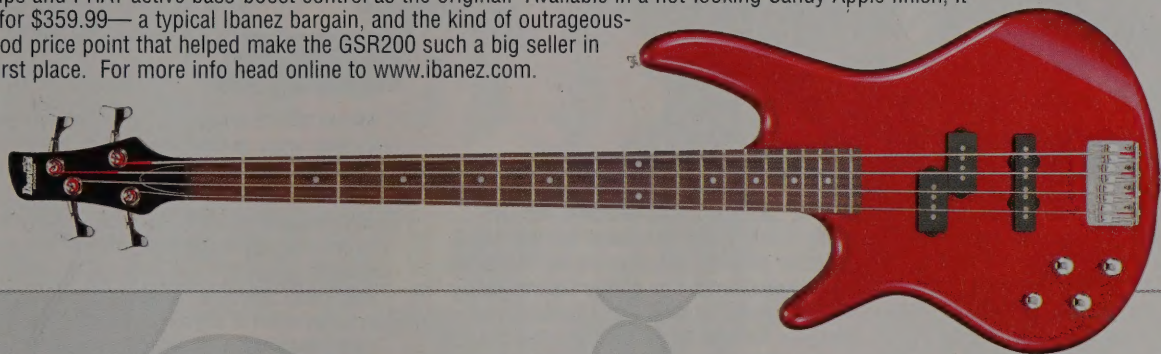




A GUIDE TO THE LATEST GEAR

IBANEZ

Ibanez makes what it calls the best-selling bass guitar in the world—the GSR200—and now it makes a left-handed version. Naturally it's the GSR200L and it's got the same Agathis wood body, slim Gio Soundgear neck, Powersound P & J passive-electronic pickups and PHAT active bass-boost control as the original. Available in a hot-looking Candy Apple finish, it lists for \$359.99—a typical Ibanez bargain, and the kind of outrageous-good price point that helped make the GSR200 such a big seller in the first place. For more info head online to www.ibanez.com.



CARL MARTIN PLEXITONE

Carl Martin's PlexiTone is a high-grain overdrive pedal with three different distortion modes via a crunch channel and a high-gain channel, plus 20 dB of clean boost; the crunch channel goes from a smooth, subtle overdrive sound to screaming monster metal, while the high-gain channel starts at arena-rock levels and goes up from there. All that for under \$300! For more info check out www.carlmartin.com online.

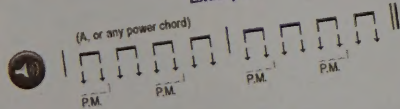


eMedia Rock Guitar Method

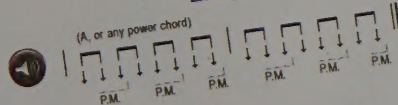
81 Mixing Palm Muting with Regular Strums

We've looked at palm muting 8th notes, a very common rock approach. Equally common is the idea of muting only some of the strums in a pattern. Here are two very common ones you can try out and use. The first contour was used in Green Day's "When I Come Around" and the second in Jewel's song "Hey You". To play these patterns just lower the palm for the muted strums and lift it just off the bridge (you don't have to go up far) for the unmuted strums.

Example 1



Example 2



EMEDIA ROCK GUITAR METHOD

EMedia, publisher of the world's best-selling guitar tutorial CD-ROMs, has just put out its new Rock Guitar Method disc. It's got over 100 step-by-step audio- and video-enhanced lessons showing songs, chords, riffs and gear tips for tunes by the likes of Ozzy Osbourne, Black Sabbath, Nirvana, Van Halen, and more, plus riffs in the style of bands like Blink 182, Hoobastank, AC/DC, Rage Against the Machine, Sum 41 and more. Power chords, barre chords, hammer-ons and pull-offs, palm-muting, blues scales, distorted riffs, movable major and minor scales and more, they're all covered. And there's

also an automatic tuner, metronome, recorder and chord dictionary. All that for the ridiculously low price of \$39.95—no wonder eMedia's the world's best seller. For more info check out www.emedia.com online.

INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING

BEAT DRUM

PAISTE

Paiste's superb Signature and Dimensions cymbals now come with the gorgeous, shimmering proprietary Reflector finish which the Swiss cymbal giant first introduced in the 1980s. The Reflector process adds the glassy, luminous finish without producing high heat-levels that can alter or muffle the cymbal's sound. And since these are among Paiste's most musical and sophisticated cymbals, you know they sound incredible—though the finish does give them a slightly lower, darker tone, a cooler and cleaner frequency mix, slightly shorter sustain in the midrange, and a greater separation of shoulder and bell sounds. Crashes and Chinas also tend to feel a bit softer and more controllable with the Reflector finish. For more info check out www.paiste.com.



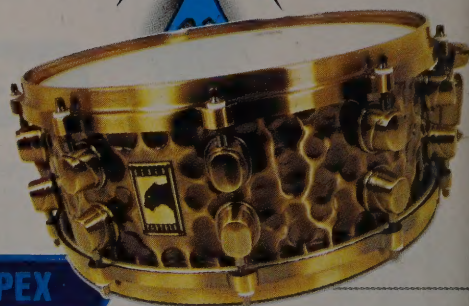
SABIAN

Finally, another big cymbal-maker, Sabian, has responded to demand for tougher cymbals for younger players with its new B8 Rock Set: modern, professional-quality cymbals for beginning and intermediate players, with weight and thickness to withstand the hardest bashing at the highest volume levels. Perfect for our readers! The B8 Rock Set comes in a sonically matched 4-pack with 14 inch Rock hi-hats, 16 and 18 inch Rock crashes and 20 inch Rock ride. For more info visit www.sabian.com online.



MAPEX

Mapex has introduced two new limited edition Black Panther snare drums: the Vavona Burlwood snare and the Hand-Hammered Bronzed snare. The Vavona is made of wood so exotic only 200 of them will be made, 50 of them for the U.S. And the wood—from an environmentally protected exotic redwood, with remarkable strength and utterly unique sonic qualities—is sourced exclusively to Mapex, making them doubly rare. The Bronzed snare is actually made of brass, which undergoes a proprietary black-chrome plating that is then given a unique bronze polishing, so it's not exactly the most common drum in the world either! The hand-hammering adds to the drum's dynamic range, giving the drum some of the richness and depth of hardwood with the crispness of metal. Both snares come in standard 14 by 5.5 inch sizes, with die-cast matching hoops and low-mass lugs. For more go to www.mapexdrums.com online.



Aaron "Monty" Montgomery

and Yamaha Drums

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